

State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0096
(916) 319-2094
Fax: (916) 319-2162

Willie Guerrero
Chief Consultant
Patricia L. Hawkins
Committee Secretary



Members:
Roy Ashburn, Vice Chair
Sam Aanestad
Bill Campbell
Tony Cardenas
Dennis Cardoza
Lynn Daucher
Marco A. Firebaugh
Jerome Horton
Christine Kahoe
Bill Leonard
George Nakano
Jenny Oropeza
Kevin Shelley
Juan Vargas

**TRANSCRIPT OF
PUBLIC HEARING ON REDISTRICTING
INDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST
MAY 11, 2001**

**FRESNO CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 2ND FLOOR
2600 FRESNO STREET
FRESNO, CA 93721**

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The Committee invites individuals and organizations who made presentations at the hearing to advise it in writing if there are any errors in transcription that alter the substance of their testimony.

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PUBLIC HEARING ON REDISTRICTING
IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

May 11, 2001

Fresno City Hall
City Council Chambers - 2nd Floor
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, California 93721

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Reported By: GRETA GREGORY, CSR 8612, JULIE KEENEY, CSR 8804
(106563)

1 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Good morning. Thank you
2 For attending this hearing of the Assembly Committee on
3 Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments.
4 The California Assembly is committed to conducting a
5 fair and open redistricting process in which members of
6 the public are able to have a voice and an effective role.
7 This is the second in a series of hearings that we've
8 held in various locations throughout the state for the
9 purpose of gathering your views into the redistricting
10 process. As you know, we're all impacted by the census
11 bureau every ten years, and redistricting is the process
12 by which the lines for the state legislature, congress
13 and for state board of equalization districts are
14 changed every ten years to reflect changes in population
15 concentration.

16 The last census was a year ago April. We
17 received a detailed result after that census at the end
18 of March of this year, and these census results show us
19 that California has experienced an overall population
20 increase beyond the average within the United States,
21 which means that we have an additional congressional
22 seat and that our population has shifted within the
23 state, so that some areas that currently have a
24 particular number of districts will need more districts
25 because they now have a greater portion of this state's

1 population and some areas where the population has not
2 grown as much in the last ten years as the average will
3 lose districts or portions of districts.

4 California has an overall population as of a
5 year ago April of 33,871,646 people, so it's -- we have
6 to draw 80 assembly districts out of that number, 40
7 senate districts out of that number, 53 congressional
8 districts and four state board of equalization districts
9 within those groups. Each district should be as nearly
10 as practical the same identical population, so we have
11 to redraw the lines to make that the case, and the
12 typical assembly district, for example, is going to have
13 a population now of about 423,396 people in it, and
14 we'll try and get as close as we can to drawing the
15 lines so that we have almost exactly 423,396 people in
16 each assembly district.

17 That just to get some perspective on that, the
18 last redistricting ten years ago, typical assembly
19 district population was about 372,000, so the state's
20 grown quite a bit. Senate districts will be exactly
21 double that population. Districts in the house of
22 representatives now will be about 639,088, and those
23 changes in population that have occurred will be
24 reflected, that's the number one goal we have to achieve
25 in drawing new lines. There are various other

1 requirements we have to meet, as well. We have to -- we
2 need requirements from the constitution, the Federal
3 Voting Rights Act and the California Constitution as
4 well as any court decisions that have been made in
5 recent years, and the single most important factor we
6 have to look at other than just population numbers is
7 what are called communities of interest, and communities
8 of interest can be very broadly defined. They can
9 include any kind of ties that bind communities together.

10 A community that's around a river port, for
11 example, has an interest, a community that's in a valley
12 with mountains on either side of it is a community of
13 interest, so it could be geographic. Also, community
14 might -- a community of interest might include people
15 who all came from Latin America. That might be a
16 community of interest. They may now tend to live in one
17 area, that's a community of interest, might be people
18 who have something else in common whether it's
19 socioeconomic data or any number of things that make
20 people feel like they belong together, they are a
21 community of interest, and, so, of course, there are
22 many overlapping communities of interest around the
23 state, and what we need to do is find out from you which
24 communities of interest are most important to you, so
25 that we try at least to avoid drawing lines that split

1 communities of interest more than necessary, and so we
2 try to make sure that where we do, we're not splitting
3 what you consider to be the most important communities
4 of interest, but rather going along the lines of one
5 that you consider to be less crucial, so we will attempt
6 to do that, and in doing this your testimony will play a
7 very major role in how we draw the lines through this
8 area.

9 Our main purpose today is to get that
10 testimony. If you wish to offer testimony on matters
11 other than redistricting we will attempt to accommodate
12 you, but that's the primary purpose here today is
13 redistricting. And let me tell you there are some other
14 ways you can put in information. If you don't get -- if
15 you are a little bashful today but you would still like
16 to give us some input or if you came just to watch, but
17 after listening what's said today you feel like there
18 are things you can add, there are other ways you can get
19 input to me. Obviously, you can write us, we also have
20 a web site and that's a good way to get in touch with
21 us. And I believe we have a sign up here somewhere with
22 the web site; is that correct? Do we have a sign with a
23 web site up someplace? All right.

24 There are on the table outside there is
25 information which includes among other things the web

1 site address, so I'd welcome you to take and gather the
2 various information out there, and all of the hearings
3 will appear on that web site, the list of all the
4 hearings and the web site address for those who want to
5 write it down is [www.assembly, A-S-S-E-M-B-L-Y,](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/erca)
6 [.ca.gov/erca](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/erca), that's E-R-C-A for the committee name
7 Elections Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments.
8 We also have addresses. Anyone who wants this
9 information we have it on the list outside of the
10 outside. I won't go through all of this in any greater
11 detail, but we have a variety of information out front
12 which you can also review that will describe our
13 processes and the ways in which we're going to -- ways
14 in which you can make it easiest to give us your input
15 on where district lines should be. We will, by the way,
16 after holding these hearings around the state, we'll go
17 back to Sacramento. We will make a stab at drawing some
18 lines and then we'll go at least another couple of days
19 of hearings after we come up with some lines so you can
20 give us some feedback then as well and tell us how well
21 we've done and if there's anything that you think needs
22 to be changed. When we do that those hearings will be
23 announced on the web site, as well, and we will even
24 attempt if we can do so, we're not certain we can do
25 this yet, but we will attempt when we hold those

1 hearings in Sacramento to see if we can have a live
2 hook-up right here to this very same location, and we'll
3 announce that so that people who came here today, if you
4 want to can come back and participate by a computer
5 hook-up and possibly even a video hook-up, an audio
6 hook-up with that hearing in Sacramento after we've
7 drawn lines, so we want to thank you for your
8 participation today and hope you'll continue to
9 participate as the process moves along, and I want to
10 welcome as well and invite a few remarks perhaps from
11 one of your local members of the assembly who has joined
12 us on the committee today, assembly member, Sarah Reyes.

13 MS. REYES: Thank you. I want to welcome the
14 assembly committee on elections and reapportionment to
15 my district. CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE, if you didn't know,
16 you are currently sitting in the 31st assembly district,
17 so welcome. And I do want to welcome the chairman, John
18 Longville, who I think has probably the most difficult
19 task in the state assembly this year as he goes through
20 reapportionment. It is not an easy task that he has
21 been assigned, but one that I know that he is up for the
22 task and will do a very fair and open job. I want to
23 welcome all of you to this committee hearing. This is
24 an important process that we go through every ten years,
25 and I would hope that all of you would allow your voices

1 to be heard and your concerns to be heard as we move to
2 deciding who represents the areas of the entire state of
3 California. Reapportionment being only ten years, this
4 is an opportunity for you to have those statements. I
5 will tell you that I want to thank the speaker, Bob
6 Hertzberg and Senator John Burton for making this issue
7 so open to all California and notice that we're not
8 having these hearings just in Sacramento, but we're here
9 in Fresno and we're going to be going throughout the
10 state to hear from Californians, to hear from community
11 of interest, to hear from people how they think the
12 process to go as we move forward. So I look forward to
13 hearing from all of you. I will say now that I am going
14 to have to duck out a little after 12:00 because I have
15 about 400 seniors that are having lunch today that I
16 have to go and do a welcoming address to, but I look
17 forward to hearing your comments today and thank you
18 assembly member, John Longville, and really for the
19 staff because I think you and I would admit that the
20 staff has put a lot of work into all of this whether
21 it's the member staff or individual committee staff
22 members or the sergeants, they've done a great job.

23 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: We will take a brief
24 break occasionally for two reasons: To allow our court
25 reporter to every once and a while to stretch her

1 fingers and to allow the people who are recording this
2 with an audio tape to flip the tape over, so it may
3 occasionally get a signal from one of them that to take
4 a brief break and we'll do that, we'll accommodate that.

5 We also try to begin the hearing by checking
6 if we have any of our officials from the area who are --
7 first, any of them in the federal government, if any of
8 the local members of congress showed up we were unaware
9 of anybody, but if there any we would invite them to
10 step forward. If there are none, if there were any
11 other state officials who were in attendance that we're
12 unaware of it, we would invite you to step forward at
13 this time. If there are none, then we have several
14 people who have been scheduled in advance to testify,
15 and I will begin with them.

16 At the end of the people who have been
17 scheduled, by the way, we will have an open microphone.
18 There's a sign-in sheet, which is I believe out in the
19 lobby area, and if you have not been scheduled ahead of
20 time, you want to make sure and sign in on there and
21 we'll take -- our first scheduled witness is Kathleen
22 Crookham, County Supervisor, County of Merced. And
23 thank you very much, supervisor, we welcome you.

24 MS. CROOKHAM: Well, thank you. It's really a
25 pleasure to be here, and I am so pleased that you are

1 having these hearings throughout the state, and hello to
2 Assemblyman Reyes. I'm Kathleen Crookham, and I'm a
3 county supervisor for Merced in District Two, and I'm
4 also a rancher in Merced County. I am a former school
5 administrator retired from Merced County. I'm a mother
6 of three and a grandmother of three and about
7 eight-ninths, so we're going to have a grandchild the
8 end of this month.

9 I'm a native of Merced County. My
10 grandparents came to the county in 1880, bought
11 property, which we still have in our family, and we
12 still maintain as a ranch, which is in some respect
13 really an awesome feat in itself, but Merced County has
14 grown and changed very much in my lifetime, but there's
15 still ways that it remains much the same as in my youth.

16 Merced County has many attributes and
17 significant problems. We share overwhelming communities
18 of interest with Stanislaus County for which we're now
19 joined in the representative districts. These community
20 of interests include, number one, the same agricultural
21 product and industry base. Number two, small rural
22 communities surrounding moderate sized county hub seats.
23 Five of these communities represent the largest
24 population on the west side of the valley. Number
25 three, we share highly ethnically diverse populations

1 including large Hispanic, Portuguese and more recently
2 Hmong populations. There are also significant Sikh and
3 Asian communities which are more unique to these two
4 counties.

5 We have many growing bedroom communities that
6 commute to the Bay Area, most especially the Silicon
7 Valley, and recently there have been a number of
8 articles showing the number of people who have moved to
9 Los Banos and the large migration out every morning and
10 those who return again in the evening.

11 Number five, our educational systems which we
12 share with California State University, Stanislaus has a
13 hub, the Tri-County center, which is based at the Merced
14 Community College, which now has developed a partnership
15 programs between the community public schools, the
16 community colleges, Stanislaus State University and UC
17 Merced, and they address the unique needs of our area,
18 which include high dropout high school rates and also
19 low UC attendance, and probably the most significant
20 that we share is our economic conditions and problems,
21 which include some of the highest unemployment and the
22 highest poverty levels in the state of California. And,
23 number seven, in the last decade we have experienced
24 dramatic effects of several military bases closing.
25 Castle Air Force Base in Merced County, and several

1 smaller bases in and about Stanislaus County also have
2 closed. Merced and Stanislaus counties also share new
3 economic development strategies that were aimed and
4 addressing these dramatic changes at the same time
5 preserving our agricultural place and our vast wetlands.
6 In decades prior to the last Merced County was also
7 often divided up into representative districts in which
8 primarily were based in Fresno County as well as
9 Stanislaus County and even Santa Cruz County, which is
10 unbelievable.

11 While we enjoy representatives by a large
12 number of excellent legislatures, we are nonetheless
13 small corners of these districts and which dilutes the
14 significance and importance of unique conditions and the
15 needs that we have.

16 Fresno historically is the largest community
17 of the San Joaquin Valley, has increased in recent years
18 and decade and has become a very large urbanized area
19 with needs and challenges similar to the other
20 metropolitan areas in California. In the last decade
21 Merced County has been wholly and legislative
22 congressional districts joined primarily with Stanislaus
23 County with whom we share most of the communities of
24 interest, which I have mentioned.

25 Thus, it has allowed us to bring a focus to

1 the unique and significant challenges that our
2 communities face and to work in a unified effort with
3 our legislatures to address our needs. Merced and
4 Stanislaus County remain sandwiched between large
5 cities of Fresno and Stockton. I urge you to keep these
6 two central valley areas joined in the district so that
7 we may continue to have representatives who fully
8 recognizes our challenges and can focus on our goals in
9 providing greater opportunities and prosperity for all o
10 our citizens.

11 Thank you so much for coming and thank you for
12 allowing me to explain what we really would like to have
13 as far as representatives and the government. Thank
14 you.

15 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
16 Madam Supervisor. We appreciate you taking the time to
17 be here. Our next witness will be from the Asian
18 American and Pacific Islander network of Central
19 California, and actually we have a group of witnesses I
20 believe yet, and my understanding is that we have the
21 one microphone there, but we have several chairs, if
22 people want to pull up to the chairs and then come up to
23 the microphone each in order, and I believe Debbie Tom,
24 Ms. Tom, is it pronounced Tom?

25 MS. TOM: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Are you going to then
2 introduce each of your colleagues in turn? Do you want
3 to do that or do you want me to introduce them
4 individually? What's your preference?

5 MS. TOM: I can, if you like.

6 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Why don't you go ahead
7 and we'll just let you take charge of the show here for
8 the next few minutes.

9 MS. TOM: Good morning. Thank you for having
10 us here. My name is Debbie Tom. I work as a consultant
11 with non-profit organizations. Currently, I am
12 completing a special project on the Southeast Asian
13 communities for The California Endowment. The
14 California Endowment is a private foundation dedicated
15 to meeting the health needs of California's diverse
16 people.

17 I graduated from California State University,
18 Fresno. I lived in Clovis in the mid '70's and late
19 '80's. After a decade of living on the East Coast I
20 moved back to Fresno last summer. My work has been with
21 the immigrant and refugee communities on both coasts. I
22 have been a member of the Central California Asian
23 Pacific Women's organization, the Japanese Citizens
24 League, and most recently, as one of the three
25 facilitators for the Asian American and Pacific Islander

1 (AAPI) Network in the central valley. I have also been
2 a registered voter all of my adult life.

3 My comments today will be an overview of the
4 diversity and complexity of Central California's Asian
5 American and Pacific Islander communities. The
6 formation of the Central California AAPI Network is a
7 direct result of town hall meetings organized by the
8 White House Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific
9 Islanders. The commission released its report on Asian
10 Americans and Pacific Islanders earlier this year. This
11 report to the nation is entitled Asian Americans and
12 Pacific Islanders: A People Looking Forward. It
13 carries the theme of Action for Access and Partnerships
14 in the 21st Century. This report is available on-line
15 at www.aapi.gov. I wish to highlight three of the
16 commission's findings.

17 First, Asian American and Pacific Islanders
18 remain the fastest growing ethnic and racial population
19 in the United States. 35 percent of Asian Americans and
20 Pacific Islanders live in the linguistically isolated
21 households where no one aged 14 or older speaks English
22 very well. 61 percent of Hmong American households, 56
23 percent of Cambodian American households, 52 percent of
24 Laotian American households, 44 percent of Vietnamese
25 American households, 41 percent of Korean American

1 households and 40 percent of Chinese American households
2 are linguistically isolated.

3 1.4 million Asian Americans of Pacific
4 Islanders or 13 percent of the population were at or
5 below the federal poverty level in 1998; in 1989 poverty
6 rates for Hmong Americans was 66 percent, 43 percent for
7 Cambodian Americans and 35 percent for Laotian
8 Americans.

9 The 2000 census data show that AAPI population
10 both occurred in central valley counties. The census
11 counted approximately 280,000 Asian Americans and
12 Pacific Islanders in the Fresno, Kern, Merced, San
13 Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare counties. This figure is
14 an undercount because it does not include -- only
15 include single-race individuals and does not include
16 multi-race individuals. All except Merced are within
17 the top 20 California counties with high Asian Americans
18 and Pacific Islander populations.

19 The impact of the population growth is evident
20 in the changing dynamics of our neighborhoods,
21 specifically in the cities such as Fresno, Visalia,
22 Merced, Modesto, Stockton. We see storefronts in
23 various Asian language such as Hmong, Khmer, Lao,
24 Vietnamese, Chinese and Indian, and we see mini-malls
25 like Asian Village here in Fresno operated and owned by

1 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The most visible
2 entrepreneurial enterprises are the food establishments.
3 They are Vietnamese, Thai, Indian and Chinese
4 restaurants and Seven-Eleven type stores operated by
5 Sikhs and East Indians. Hmong, Lao and Cambodians have
6 established auto shops and dealerships. Many of these
7 businesses are in the urban areas of central valley
8 cities and towns.

9 In addition to the small business
10 establishments, many Asian Americans and Pacific
11 Islanders contribute to the valley's agricultural
12 economy. They work in the fields, lease land for
13 farming and others are farm owners. Our representative
14 from the Hmong American community will describe the
15 challenges faced by our small farmer.

16 Other visible establishments are churches and
17 places of worship and community-based health and human
18 organizations. The Asian American and Pacific Islanders
19 are active in various Christian and non-Christian
20 faith-based organizations. Fresno is home to the newest
21 and second largest Cambodian Temple in the United
22 States. It is located at the corner of Valentine and
23 Clinton, the largest one is in Washington DC. Fresno is
24 home to the Muslim Mosque, across from California State
25 University Fresno; and located in Fresno Chinatown is

1 the Japanese Buddhist Temple designated a historical
2 landmark.

3 The AAPI network has a mailing list in Fresno,
4 Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare Counties.
5 Our outreach efforts have brought together Cambodians,
6 Chinese, East Indians, Hawaiians, Hmong, Japanese,
7 Koreans, Lahu, Laotians, Mien, Filipinos, Samoans, Sikhs
8 Thais, Vietnamese and many others from the U.S. Census
9 category for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
10 These individuals are affiliates of over 50
11 community-based organizations.

12 These AAPI community-based groups provide a
13 host of social services and organize events that enrich
14 our life in the valley. Special celebrations are
15 planned for the month of May, which is Asian Pacific
16 American Heritage Month and Refugee Awareness Month.
17 Upcoming events in Fresno are May 19th, the E Street
18 Fair in Chinatown. May 25th, Refugee Awareness Day,
19 Asian Village; May 25th, 26th and 27, Southwest Asian
20 Water Festival, Kearney Park; and May 26, an all Asian
21 American and Pacific Islander Graduation Ceremony at
22 Fresno State.

23 These AAP events show that our communities are
24 located in all quadrants of the city of Fresno. We
25 request that you consider metro Fresno as an important

1 community of interest to hold intact instead of cutting
2 it into several districts as it currently is.

3 The network members are energized and
4 enthusiastic about our numbers and our ability to
5 strengthen valley Asian American and Pacific Islander
6 voice utilizing the White House Commission's findings
7 and recommendations. Our capacity to engage in civic
8 efforts like the redistricting process is strengthened
9 by our linkage with other AAPI organizations statewide.
10 Approximately 25 central valley AAPI's participated in
11 the Asian American and Pacific Islander California
12 Action Network Legislative Conference. At that March
13 conference we met with our local elected officials like
14 Sarah Reyes. The redistricting process was explained
15 and an additional redistricting workshop was provided by
16 the Asian Pacific Legal Center for our network members
17 in Fresno.

18 We are not prepared at this time to present a
19 proposal for assembly districts, however the AAPI
20 network members will share specific information about
21 the communities they represent. They will also share
22 goals and priorities which are important to insuring the
23 full and meaningful enfranchisement for their
24 communities.

25 In conclusion, Asian American and Pacific

1 Islanders contribute to California's economic,
2 spiritual, cultural and political life. The AAPI
3 network of Central California will continue to convene
4 to address common concerns and to strengthen our valley
5 voice. Our network is committed to fostering a
6 cooperative spirit as we move forward in this process.
7 We urge you to enforce the Voting Rights Act and to keep
8 our diverse communities whole so that our voices are
9 represented. Review our communities' participation in
10 the redistricting process as the next step to insuring
11 our communities count. Participating in our discussion
12 have been representatives from a broad array of groups.
13 Voices of our network are from the Organization of
14 Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans Citizens League,
15 Fresno Center for New Americans, Hmong Americans
16 Community, Asian Americans Coalition based in Visalia,
17 and Chinatown Revitalization, Inc. of Fresno. Thank you
18 for the opportunity to speak and for holding this
19 hearing in Fresno.

20 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you, Ms. Tom. If I
21 may, before you introduce the other speakers, let me
22 just introduce who the other members are just joined us
23 on the dias, and let me know we've been joined by
24 assembly member Tony Cardenas on your right, on my left,
25 from the San Fernando Valley, and by assembly member

1 Bill Leonard on my far right, but on your left.
2 Assembly member Bill Leonard is from the San Bernardino
3 area adjoining my own district. In fact, Assemblyman
4 Leonard is one of the most senior members of the
5 legislature and also a member the elections and
6 reapportionment committee, and if either of you have any
7 observations that you want to make as we start out,
8 there's certainly both of you want to note anything
9 before we hear the testimony. Mr. Cardenas?

10 MR. CARDENAS: Good morning. Once again my
11 name is Tony Cardenas. I'm state assemblyman from
12 another smaller valley, the San Fernando Valley down
13 south. I just wanted to say I welcome your testimony
14 and I appreciate your testimony, because your testimony
15 and your opinions and your perspectives will go very far
16 in determining how the redistricting process will be
17 handled in the legislature this year, and it is your
18 input and testimony being that you are the community
19 that we serve and you are the community that will be
20 served by the redistricting process, so I just wanted to
21 say thank you very much for coming today to take this
22 testimony very seriously and it will be part of the
23 permanent record of this process, so thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
25 Mr. Cardenas. Mr. Leonard.

1 MR. LEONARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want
2 to apologize for being late. Every time I come to
3 Fresno it gets busier and busier. I too want to welcome
4 everyone, and I'm here to listen to your input on the
5 redistricting and am pleased with the turnout that's in
6 the audience today and the number of interested parties
7 and welcome your testimony, so excuse the interruption.

8 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much, and
9 just to fill in the two members, the only testimony you
10 missed so far was Supervisor Kathleen Crookham, the
11 County of Merced, which gave us testimony, and that, of
12 course, is on tape and will be part of the transcript,
13 and Ms. Debbie Tom is coordinating the presentation.
14 Ms. Tom is with the Asian American and Pacific Islander
15 network of Central California and has several additional
16 people who have joined her today representing various
17 sections of the Asian community, and she is going to
18 introduce them to continue with the testimony at this
19 time. Ms. Tom.

20 MS. TOM: Thank you. I would like to next
21 present our representative from the organization of
22 Chinese Americans and also representing the Chinatown
23 Revitalization of Fresno, Inc., Kathleen Omachi,
24 O-M-A-C-H-I.

25 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: And ladies and gentlemen,

1 as you begin of your testimony if you could just once
2 give your name and spell it for the record, and I've
3 also been advised and I'm probably the worst at this,
4 but I'll pass the word along that it's helpful for the
5 court reporters if I don't talk real quickly like this
6 all the time, so I'll try not to.

7 MS. OMACHI: Thank you. Good morning,
8 Honorable Assembly Members. It's a pleasure to be here.
9 My name is Kathleen Satomi Omachi, and the middle name
10 is spelled S-A-T-O-M-I, spelling of the last name is
11 O-M-A-C-H-I. I'm here on behalf of the Asian Pacific
12 community within the great central valley, and to
13 discuss with you some of our redistricting needs in
14 light of our history in this community. Very briefly
15 about myself, my family has been in the central Valley
16 and in the Fresno area for over 100 years. In fact, my
17 father was born in 1913 in China Alley in Chinatown.
18 That may be one reason why I helped organized and now am
19 officer for the Chinatown Revitalization here in Fresno.
20 I also am one of the original charter members for the
21 Central Valley Organization for Chinese Americans, an
22 organizing member of the Asian Pacific American Heritage
23 Coalition. I'm also very pleased to sit on the board
24 for Fresno Revitalization Corporation that deals with
25 redevelopment in the downtown Fresno area. I have been

1 a board member and past officer for the Marjorie Mason
2 Center, which in the valley provides one of the largest
3 shelters and advocacies supports for women who are
4 abused and their children, and I am pleased to be a
5 member of the Fresno Planned Growth coalition, which is
6 now taking on the issue of how we look in this community
7 and what kind of legacy we provide for our children in
8 the future. I also sit and helped organize the El Rio
9 Reyes River Trust Fund, which is the only Kings River
10 preservation organization in the valley. I have been in
11 the area of community organizing for over 30 years,
12 which you can add or take off a little bit of years for
13 how old I am, but I have been very pleased to work in
14 communities, to be able to secure much needed accessible
15 services that through, local, state and federal funds
16 which have addressed the needs of multi-lingual mental
17 health services, multi-cultural senior services.
18 Non-traditional journeyman employment for teen parents
19 and particularly teen mothers under 16 years old.
20 Employment training for Asian American and Asian
21 American youth, refugee services, multi-cultural
22 educational curriculum development, preservation of low
23 income and high minority population neighborhoods and
24 agricultural resources.

25 Once again, as I said, that my family has been

1 here for over 100 years. We were also faced with a
2 situation of never being able to financially own a home,
3 so I speak to you today as not only a person from the
4 Asian Pacific community where many individuals see us as
5 have making it or have made it in this community, but
6 you do need to know that many of us had been raised also
7 in homes that did not have solid floor woods and were
8 never able to say that we owned our own homes.

9 Part of what we are talking about today is the
10 Fresno area historically. Most of you remember some of
11 you history in the area that the majority of the
12 individuals that came to California, and in particular
13 the central Valley came after the Gold Rush in the
14 1840's. The population in Fresno, and that's less than
15 a mile away from here, is an area called Chinatown.
16 Chinatown was the home, the original home since the
17 1860's and was incorporated in 1875 of nine separate
18 community groups that called the area their base of
19 their home and their businesses, which included African
20 American, Armenian, Basque, Chinese, Japanese, Italian,
21 Portugese, German, American, and there's one other
22 community that I always forget, so I'm going to have to
23 apologize on that one.

24 One of the reasons why you are such a large
25 number and that same community stayed together up until

1 about the 1930's and 40's, and if most of you look at
2 historically the reason why there was such a
3 concentration of individuals who had their businesses
4 there, lived there, had their own schools and their own
5 hospitals, is that they were not allowed to live
6 anywhere else in this area. Then the change in
7 government and the change with some of the government
8 policies people did move and they did disburse, what you
9 see now historically is some of the movement within our
10 community. The Japanese, Americans and Chinese
11 Americans communities within the area have moved north,
12 the north section of Fresno, but the rural communities
13 have always stayed intact.

14 You have one of the highest concentrations of
15 the Japanese Americans communities in the south valley,
16 which would be the Fowler, Sanger, Selma and Reedley
17 areas of community. Those are individuals who have been
18 here for over 100 years, have established both Christian
19 and Buddhist churches, have been in the area of
20 agriculture. Again, that is a theme that has gone on
21 historically within the Japanese American, Chinese
22 American and new members of the Asian Pacific community
23 is agriculture, and you will hear that throughout the
24 presentation today. The one identifying large community
25 of interest that affected our redistricting needs is

1 that economic base of agricultural.

2 What you will see within the Japanese and the

3 Chinese American community is that you might consider

4 long time, quote, Americanized communities is that we

5 bore the brunt of all of the legislative

6 discriminational acts from the 1800's up until I would

7 say the mid '50's. Growing up in this area, I'm a third

8 generation Japanese American, I started school speaking

9 Armenian, Japanese and a little English. I was

10 classified as MR or mentally retarded. I'm very pleased

11 to let you know that being able to get through school in

12 Reedley Junior College, Fresno State and I graduated

13 with my Masters in social work at UC Berkley, but that

14 kind of stigmatism that can carry on with individuals

15 who speak a separate language or additional languages

16 carries on throughout their life. We are looking also

17 within our families. In the Sacramento area

18 historically just south of you are two areas that you

19 should be very familiar with, which is Walnut Grove and

20 Isleton. Walnut Grove and Isleton are the homes of one

21 of the largest concentration of isolated Filipino senior

22 men. They were the direct recipients of the

23 anti-miscegenation laws in California which precluded

24 any man of color to marry any Caucasian woman.

25 Legislatively what had happened in that issue is that it

1 kept any family from reuniting. It also kept anyone
2 from establishing familiar roots in this community.
3 Many of those individuals have passed on. They have
4 passed on alone.

5 Additionally, some other legislative impacts
6 have happened when voting rights and the issue of
7 minority community comes up is the Chinese community,
8 also not too far from the Sacramento area, which the
9 individuals were allowed to own their homes, but not the
10 land. This went on until the 1970's and was not
11 resolved until almost 1980 where those individuals were
12 not going to be evicted off of that prime property so
13 that many of the legislative actions that have been
14 taken historically, and that's how we also view the
15 redistricting, has long terms affects.

16 What we ask you to keep in mind is that for
17 the Asian American community we have been here for many
18 years, we are your neighbors, your friends, some of your
19 family members. We have a long history. We have a
20 right to have the one person, I know it's one man, but
21 one person, one vote and we strongly, strongly support
22 the Voting Rights Act. Thank you so much.

23 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
24 madam, and I also usually say one person, one vote. I
25 know Baker versus Carr was one man, one vote, but that

1 was -- they were a little early. It was 1967, you know.

2 Took a few years after that. By the way, let me just

3 really -- how are we doing on the tape? You need.

4 MR. BROOKS: It's fine.

5 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: How long do you have

6 before you need to --

7 MS. IKEDA: Good morning. My name is Debbie

8 Ikeda. I'm the associate Dean of Students at Fresno

9 City College, but today I'm talking to you as past

10 president of the Fresno Japanese Americans Citizens

11 League and for the governor of the Central California

12 District Council of the Japanese Americans Citizens

13 League, Mr. Bob Taniguchi, who lives in Merced and was

14 unable to be here today. I have lived in Fresno for

15 over 20 years and my husband's family has been in Clovis

16 for four generations on a small family farm for years as

17 a Clovis farming family. He since left the farming and

18 is now recently appointed as a superior court judge here

19 in Fresno, so we're very happy, thanks to Sarah.

20 The Japanese Americans Citizens League is the

21 nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights

22 organization and was founded in 1929 to address issues

23 of discrimination targeted specifically at persons of

24 Japanese ancestry residing in the United States. The

25 JACL has 112 chapters nationwide and eight regional

1 district with over 24,000 members. The vast majority of
2 these members are in the state of California in addition
3 to our national headquarters in San Francisco, the JACL
4 has regional offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco,
5 Seattle, Chicago and right here in Fresno as well as an
6 office in Washington D.C., and an organizational
7 newspaper, the Pacific Citizen that is distributed
8 nationally from its offices in Los Angeles.

9 While the JACL's founding mission was focused
10 on protecting the civil rights of Americans and Japanese
11 ancestry, today we are committed to protecting the
12 rights of all segments of the Asian Pacific American
13 community. This change was first prompted in the early
14 1980's when a young Chinese American man was murdered in
15 Detroit when he was mistaken for a Japanese American
16 person. The murder of Vincent Chin brought about the
17 recognition by the JACL of the need for vigilance to
18 maintain the rights of all Asian Americans, for it
19 became apparent that those who would do harm to the
20 Japanese Americans did not discriminate in their hatred
21 and bigotry against Asians or other peoples of color.

22 The presidential elections of 2000 have
23 demonstrated the importance of voting for our leaders.
24 We are committed to working with coalition groups to
25 insure that our voice is heard and that our votes are

1 represented at the ballot box. Voter registration was
2 one of the JACL's major initiatives in year 2000 and it
3 is a continuing agenda item for us on our Program for
4 Action.

5 During the past three decades as the Asian
6 American population has continued to grow and as other
7 Asian ethnic groups emerged in the broader Asian
8 American community, the JACL recognized the need and
9 responded to the challenge of insuring the rights and
10 well-being of all Asian Americans. The Central
11 California District Council of the JACL or CCDC has
12 endeavored to carry out the mission and goals of our
13 national organization. The Central California District
14 Council has chapters in ten valley cities from
15 Livingston in the north, Tulare in the south. Chapters
16 can be found in the cities of Clovis, Delano, Fowler,
17 Fresno, Livingston, Merced, Parlier, Reedley, Sanger,
18 Selma and Tulare. And as Kathy said, many of our
19 members come from a farming background. Our membership,
20 however, is involved in a variety of careers from being
21 farmers in Tulare County to being physicians right here
22 in Fresno. In addition to our voter registration,
23 coalition building and civil rights advocacy
24 initiatives, we provide several other services to our
25 valley communities.

1 The Central California District Council of the
2 JACL awards up to six merit scholarships and six
3 financial needs scholarships to high school graduating
4 seniors in the valley. In addition, several of the
5 chapters have their own scholarship programs.
6 Livingston-Merced chapter mentioned southeast Asian
7 students into eighth grade to hire education. The Nisei
8 Student Relocation Commemorative Fund has given over
9 \$37,000 in scholarships for the southeast Asian seniors
10 of Merced County High School, so that's a coalition
11 building effort. The Clovis chapter has given out over
12 \$30,000 in scholarships to various high schools in the
13 Clovis area.

14 On April 28th the Fresno Chapter of the JACL
15 sponsored an Asian Youth Leadership Conference at
16 California State University, Fresno where Assemblywoman
17 Sarah Reyes was the featured speaker. Students from all
18 Asian ethnic backgrounds were represented and assembly
19 staff gave a workshop to youth on influencing the
20 political process and our youth had the opportunity to
21 grasp the basic principles of the governing processes.
22 There are future voters of this great state, and are for
23 the most part and for the most part the vast majority of
24 the Japanese American community fully exercises their
25 right to vote in every election.

1 The Central California the Japanese Americans
2 Citizens League would ask you to insure the following
3 things when you consider redistricting, and that is the
4 Voting Rights Act of 1965 is adhered to and that
5 redistricting in the valley does not dilute any minority
6 voter population group. In addition, we would request
7 that the Asian Pacific Islander group be allowed to
8 continue to provide feedback to this committee as new
9 redistricting lines are being considered so that impacts
10 to our communities can be fully assessed. We strongly
11 also believe in the one person, one vote ideal and hope
12 that you will do all that you can to make this a
13 reality. Finally, we ask that you respect the
14 differences and interests represented by our farming
15 communities and our urban dwellers and maintain our
16 communities of interest. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Again, thank you very
18 much, ma'am, we appreciate it, and our next witness.

19 MR. XIONG: Good morning, committee members.
20 You know, prior to beginning I'll go back, I'm a Hmong
21 American and prior to giving a speech or presentation in
22 front of elders, and I mean that respectfully, we always
23 ask for forgiveness to a certain point, patience and
24 understanding, that if the presentation doesn't go well
25 it does not meet the standard that is set here, so I

1 humbly ask that you be patient with me in understanding
2 this presentation. And if I go a little bit too fast,
3 go ahead and jump in. Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: The main thing we want to
5 make sure we do is at the beginning make sure we get
6 your name correct and get the spelling correct.

7 MR. XIONG: My name is Blong Xiong. It's
8 spelled B as in Bob, L-O-N-G, last name is X-I-O-N-G.
9 I'm a the program manager for Fresno Center for New
10 American, FCNA for short. I am a Hmong American that
11 has been in the U.S. for five years. Ten of those years
12 have been in the city of Fresno. I currently sit on
13 KSEE 24 Community Advisory Board and on the steering
14 committee of Fresno County Office of Education After
15 School Network. I am a registered voter and I have
16 participated in the last election.

17 I'm here on behalf of FCNA, Asian American
18 Pacific Islanders and specifically the coalition of a
19 the Central Valley. Our Central Valley AAPI population
20 goes as far south as Visalia and as far north as
21 Stockton/Modesto area. This has been truly the first
22 time the Central Valley AAPI community has had an
23 opportunity to speak on this issue and state issues that
24 are concerning us specifically here, the redistricting
25 process. I have been enlightened to issues such as the

1 importance to the Voting Rights Act, the ideal of one
2 person, one vote, the strength of community interest,
3 and the need for participation of the Central Valley
4 AAPI community in this redistricting process.

5 We support our Latino, African Americans and
6 the rest of our AAPI communities throughout California
7 in their efforts to have impact in the redistricting
8 process. I would like to take this opportunity and give
9 the community information of what FCNA does and how this
10 information can assist in part to the redistricting
11 issue in the central valley here in Fresno.

12 FCNA was established as an non-profit
13 organization about ten years ago. We are located on the
14 southeast side in the city of Fresno. There is a high
15 population of refugees and new Americans that reside in
16 this area. In addition, FCNA is located near Asian
17 Village, a predominantly southeast Asian shopping
18 center. Asian Village is located on the intersection of
19 Kings Canyon Road and Winery. We have a long-standing
20 history of successfully serving refugees and new
21 Americans. Our organization addresses issues that
22 affect this community from health education, employment
23 assistance and placement, acculturation services,
24 increasing awareness and access through advocacy. Our
25 vision is to be a resource to refugees and new Americans

1 and continue to contribute to their way of life.

2 Our recent clients have included Serbs,

3 Armenians. Polish, Russians, Ethiopians, Southeast

4 Asian communities. The majority of our services have

5 been to served this community and this is what we'll try

6 to talk more specifically about. Fresno represents this

7 diversity of AAPI communities where Asian Americans are

8 sometimes grouped together, but the fact is the majority

9 of AAPI population of Fresno is of southeast Asian

10 background. We want the state to know that the needs

11 are different from the general Asian groups. We want to

12 make sure that the southeast Asian receive the type of

13 services and accesses that will enable them to

14 acculturate yet celebrate their cultural uniqueness.

15 One stereotype would be the second wave of

16 Asian refugees after the Vietnam War is assumed

17 comparable and as successful at that of the first wave

18 of Asian, Americans, Japanese, Chinese and Koreans.

19 The second wave of Asian immigrants or

20 refugees of Southeast Asian migration include the Hmong,

21 Lao, Cambodians, Mien, and second wave of Vietnamese

22 refugees. These groups come from a society either with

23 little or no formal education, from poor or

24 low-socioeconomic background or running from political

25 retribution. The barriers of education, language

1 transportation, economic opportunities and culture have
2 negatively affected their abilities to access services
3 that can assist these groups to acculturate. One of
4 FCNA's priorities is to insure the southeast Asian
5 families have access to cultural and linguistically
6 appropriate services to adapt to their new home country,
7 yet maintain core southeast Asian family values.

8 Currently community-based organizations like
9 FCNA, churches and other institutions try to fill the
10 void. We are losing a generation of our youth because
11 we were and are not prepared to confront the barriers
12 and face the challenges of acculturation in this
13 country.

14 Southeast Asian parents are not able to teach
15 their children how to survive in this country. They
16 cannot communicate well in English and do not understand
17 the Americans culture. They do not know how to
18 community with their children. The economy of this
19 community does not support the Southeast Asian
20 workforce. Many of the Southeast Asian graduates are
21 unable to find jobs in this community and are forced to
22 leave. This separation weakens the family unit.

23 Another factor that impedes the Southeast
24 Asian growth is economic development. In the last 30
25 years the Southeast Asian businesses have survived by

1 trial and error. Economic growth has come from
2 non-standard financing where money is derived from
3 relatives and friends. Many businesses include mom and
4 pop shop, small auto dealership, insurance agencies,
5 laudromats, small farms and many other small business
6 that impact the economy of this community and the
7 central valley. For continued and sustained economic
8 growth the Southeast Asian business must be reached by
9 the many services that are available federally and at
10 the state level and locally.

11 Obtaining finances from traditional banking
12 institutions has been difficult. Technical assistance
13 has not prevalently reached the members of the
14 community. A lack of business education within the
15 community has limited their growth. Without the
16 financing, technical assistance and a sincere commitment
17 to reach the Southeast Asian community, the Southeast
18 Asian economic base will have difficulty in sustaining
19 growth. All we want is to be able to use the services
20 that are available to assist the Southeast Asian small
21 businesses.

22 The 1990 U.S. census states 60 percent of the
23 Hmong population live in households earning less than
24 \$15,000, approximately 25 percent of the U.S. Asian
25 Indian population have households that exceed \$75,000

1 while less than five percent of the Cambodian, Hmong and
2 Laotian populations have similar household income. 63
3 percent of Hmongs, 51 percent of Laotians and 47 percent
4 of Cambodians live in poverty. Approximately 37 percent
5 of AAPI household with income below poverty level with
6 no health insurance as compared to approximately 28
7 percent of non-hispanic whites and 27 percent of African
8 Americans. According to the interim report to the
9 president and the nation by the AAPI, the 1990 poverty
10 rate of all Americans was ten percent for Hmong
11 Americans. It was 66 percent, 47 percent Cambodian
12 Americans and 67 percent for Laotian Americans and 34
13 percent for Vietnamese Americans.

14 Especially here in Fresno, where the city is
15 divided into four assembly districts, we want this
16 committee to consider the similar economic situations
17 and similar cultures of the southeast Asian population.
18 To divide us would weaken us, would weaken our voices
19 and our ability to unite and advocate for services that
20 will sustain community growth. We must have an
21 opportunity to elect and rely on elected officials that
22 will seriously consider our Southeast Asian voices and
23 the voices of the AAPI population in the central valley.
24 Although there are many differences between our AAPI
25 communities, we share similar values, interests,

1 principles and economic conditions in the city of
2 Fresno.

3 I want to conclude by thanking the committee
4 for this opportunity and hope that the city of Fresno be
5 kept whole and united.

6 (Whereupon the following proceedings were
7 reported by Julie Keeney, Certified Shorthand
8 Reporter.)

9 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Next witness.

10 MR. THAO: Good morning community members. My
11 name is Chukou Thao. I'm the director for Hmong
12 American Community, Inc., in Fresno, California. I'm
13 also registered voter and have lived in Fresno County
14 for 19 years. I would also represent more than the 600
15 Hmong and Southeast Asian farmers who farm in the
16 Central Valley. I believe we are a community of
17 interest to everybody. The Hmong are a refugee group
18 from Southeast Asia. They fought beside our American
19 friends during the Vietnam War. During the past 25
20 years the Hmong chose to resettle in Fresno and Central
21 Valley. Due to a language barrier, job skills and
22 education, the Hmong have chosen farming as a way of
23 making a living. The fact is that farming is in our
24 blood and heritage. But the life of farmers is not
25 easy, especially for the small farmer. The average

1 farmer can only farm one to three acres, because they
2 lack technical support, resources and other assistance
3 to increase their acreage.

4 The less than five percent of Hmong own their
5 home or the land they farm on, and yet we have been in
6 the Central Valley for 25 years. The annual income for
7 farmers is less than \$14,000 a year, and yet given the
8 fact that they struggle through the hot sun and cold
9 winters.

10 Again, I'm director for Hmong American
11 Community. What are we currently doing to help this
12 problem? We're working to assist Hmong farmers in
13 Fresno, Merced, Tulare and Butte County. Our mission is
14 economic development. Our organization provides
15 training, pesticide health and safety, record keeping,
16 tractor driving courses, soil preparation and soil
17 management, crop management, labor laws, marketing and
18 others.

19 To further assist Hmong farmers, we have also
20 developed a Small Farm Resource and Training Center.
21 This is a multi ethnic center, which includes the
22 African-American farmers, Hispanic farmers, and others.
23 And it's also multi agency collaboration, partly with UC
24 Extension, Small Business Development Cooperation, Farm
25 Bureau, USDA and others.

1 This training facility is located on 20 acres
2 in southwest Fresno with another 20 acres to be
3 considered in the near future. This site will be an
4 incubator for farming plots for three to five farmers on
5 site, and four to five farmers off site. The
6 participants will be enrolled in training programs for a
7 period of two to three years. The minority or small
8 farmer will receive technical assistance, classroom and
9 hands-on training, again on soil management, pesticide
10 health and safety, label reading and others. Courses
11 will be taught in Hmong, Spanish and English, and other
12 languages as deemed necessary.

13 And the idea of this project is to bring
14 services to the farmer rather than sending the farmer
15 out to obtain the service. We want to coordinate this
16 where we can call the services, bring them to the
17 center, and receive the education that they need.

18 Other economic efforts HAC is involved in is
19 development of the Hmong American Cooperative. The
20 Cooperative was established to help the Hmong farmers
21 market its specialty crops for fair market price. Some
22 of our specialty crops include bitter melons, Chinese
23 eggplants, Gailon, Lemongrass, Chinese long beans, Moqua
24 and others, so if you ever want to try some, let us
25 know.

1 Currently there are 40 members in our
2 cooperative. We've also established one page on the
3 Internet and we've also developed CSA, is Community
4 Support Agriculture. As marketing, we also have secured
5 a 6-month contract to sell Daikon to broker in LA. So I
6 think from economic standpoint, we all make a
7 difference.

8 Now I want to touch on some of the needs of
9 the Hmong-American Community. The Hmong-American
10 Community has been involved and active in the economic
11 development of the Hmong community of Fresno, but
12 there's still areas of need. Marketing, finance,
13 language barriers, accessing services, land ownership
14 and others have prevented Hmong farmers from becoming
15 successful farmers.

16 Land ownership, currently less than five
17 percent of Hmong farmers own the land that they are
18 farming, and as new homes are being developed, they are
19 being pushed further and further out.

20 Marketing, the challenge of developing new
21 markets to sell Asian specialty crops has been very
22 difficult. Many of the markets in California are deeply
23 saturated. This means that we need to make contact
24 elsewhere outside of California to sell produce.

25 Financing, many Hmong farmers farm one to

1 three acres. A revolving loan would help many of them
2 in times of need. Many times a small farmer will only
3 need to borrow money for short period of time, less than
4 six months. A revolving loan will help the struggling
5 Hmong farmers by allowing them to make fast loans at low
6 interest rates.

7 Language barriers. There are many services
8 the small farmer's unable to access due to language
9 barriers, meaning service providers need to hire
10 employees who can speak Hmong to service the community.
11 Access of service. There are many services for the
12 Hmong farmers, yet they are not being utilized and
13 accessed due to lack of knowledge. Agencies need to
14 conduct more outreach into the community they serve, and
15 make the changes to fulfill the needs of the community,
16 instead of the community adapting to the services, the
17 service providers also need to adapt to the community.

18 In conclusion, I request in the process of
19 redistricting, that this community help to keep us and
20 the Asian American and Pacific Islander community
21 informed on how and where the new lines will be drawn.
22 We request when you consider new lines, that our farming
23 community be kept whole. We offer our assistance in
24 identifying where the Hmong farmers and other minority
25 farmers are located. We are a part of the community of

1 interest, as well as the community of the Asian American
2 Pacific Islander community. I want to thank you today
3 for this opportunity to speak.

4 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you for taking the
5 time to join us today, appreciate your time and trouble.

6 And I believe we still have one additional
7 witness perhaps from the coalition.

8 MS. TOM: Chairman Longville, Paul Chao is not
9 able to make it this morning, but he did send written
10 testimony I'd like to read into the record, if that's
11 possible.

12 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: That's certainly
13 permissible.

14 MS. TOM: His statement reads:

15 My name is Paul Chao. I am Executive Director
16 of the Asian-American Coalition in Visalia. I was born
17 in Laos and raised in Visalia. I currently live in
18 Visalia where I am married and raising three children.
19 I am a life-long resident of the City of Visalia. I sit
20 on the Southeast Asian Council Board in Visalia. I am
21 also member of the Visalia Police Activities League,
22 North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee and the
23 Kaweah Delta District Hospital Environmental Task Force.

24 The Asian-American Coalition in Visalia is a
25 nonprofit organization established in 1993. Since its

1 inception, Asian American Coalition has advocated for
2 health care services, workers' rights and tenants'
3 rights. Visalia has the largest Lahu population, 2000
4 in the United States, and 1,200 Mien, both tribes are
5 from Laos.

6 Asian American Coalition has been working with
7 the Asian American Pacific Islander community in Tulare
8 County to enable them to participate fully in the Census
9 2000 and redistricting process since June of 1999. We
10 view our communities' participation in the redistricting
11 process as the next step to ensuring our communities
12 count. We have conducted meetings with the APIA
13 community leaders throughout the country, and one
14 concern that has been repeatedly raised is when our
15 communities are cut up into two or more districts, our
16 collective political voice is silenced.

17 At the same time, we have recognized the
18 importance of communicating and cooperating with many
19 counterpart businesses and civil rights organizations
20 that share our community's interests, such as the
21 Hispanic Roundtable Committee of Visalia, Tulare County
22 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Asian and Pacific
23 Islanders' California Action Network, Asian Pacific
24 American Legal Center, and other groups.

25 Our county and our state are increasingly

1 diverse and growing, and the redistricting process must
2 reflect that in order for us to have a truly
3 representative political system for the next decade. We
4 urge the legislature to abide by the Voting Rights Act,
5 and draw districts that do not dilute minority
6 communities. We recognize the importance of
7 participating in the redistricting process as a way of
8 holding our communities intact so that we can elect
9 legislators who will be responsive to our concerns and
10 needs. We hope that the legislature is equally
11 committed to an open and fair redistricting process that
12 will ensure that the input from our communities is
13 meaningfully considered.

14 At Asian-American Coalition, our redistricting
15 work has been guided by two basic principles: The
16 Voting Rights Act requires legislators avoid
17 redistricting minority voter populations that might
18 dilute them, and the legislature can and should weigh
19 many factors, such as one person, one vote mandate,
20 race, communities of interest, party registration,
21 compactness, contiguity, and incumbency in developing a
22 redistricting plan.

23 I'd like to thank the Committee for holding
24 these hearings and especially for holding one here in
25 Fresno. I'd like to commend both the Committee and the

1 Legislature for gathering this community input and
2 hopefully making it a significant part of the
3 redistricting process. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you. We appreciate
5 you and all the other witnesses that came along with you
6 for taking the time today to give us this valuable
7 information. We appreciate it. Let me ask,
8 Mr. Scaarup, would you like to take a break to change
9 tape? You're fine? Okay. And are the court reporters
10 all right to continue? Okay, so we're all right to go
11 on without a formal break.

12 ASSEMBLYMEMBER LEONARD: Mr. Chairman, I don't
13 know how sophisticated our data is that we're getting as
14 to communities of interest, and a number of witnesses
15 offered to help in providing data to us, and I would
16 respectfully, through the Chair, ask that we solicit
17 that data about communities of interest so that we
18 properly interpret the census data to identify those
19 communities, and we ask for that help.

20 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: I believe in the case of
21 the witnesses, we have all their names and information
22 on them, so we can do that. And as we get into the
23 public testimony, when we get into people who have not
24 been in touch with us ahead of time, and who are not
25 already previously scheduled, we'll want to make sure

1 that we get a way of contacting you on the forms that
2 you fill out, list phone numbers and addresses so we can
3 similarly pursue, as Assemblymember Leonard was
4 suggesting, pursue any additional follow-up information
5 we may be able to obtain after listening to what you
6 have to say today. We are sincerely interested in
7 acquiring as much information as we can, and candidly
8 exploiting those of you who are willing to come out here
9 and do this community work of making sure your community
10 is well represented. We appreciate it. We want to take
11 advantage of you, and thank you, Mr. Leonard, for
12 pointing that out.

13 Our next witness will be from the William C.
14 Velasquez Institute, Mexican American Education Fund,
15 and I believe that is Mr. Salinas. Mr. Salinas, the
16 microphone is yours.

17 MR. SALINAS: Thank you. My name is Vincent
18 Salinas, and I'm representing several Hispanic Latino
19 organizations of Tulare County. And also I'd like to
20 state that there are, throughout the San Joaquin Valley,
21 Willie Velasquez Centers and MALDEF have had meetings
22 and workshops for Latinos and the community to
23 participate, and I hope that those who participated in
24 meetings and workshop will arrive here shortly and speak
25 from their perspectives of community interest.

1 As I stated, my name is Vincent Salinas, and I
2 reside at 43 South A Street, Porterville, in the County
3 of Tulare. I work for CalFed Bank as a mortgage loan
4 officer in Visalia.

5 I would like to tell you a story, a story when
6 I was growing up in Visalia. In fact, I was born and
7 raised in Visalia, and I began to work out in the fields
8 with my stepfather, starting about eight or nine years
9 old, and when we talk about community of interest, to
10 this day now, when I look back at it, that was our
11 community of interest as farm workers. When my
12 stepfather used to take me to pick oranges out in
13 Lindsay, Exeter, Porterville, Woodlake, Orange Grove,
14 you know, those are our community of interests for farm
15 workers. And then throughout the seasons, it various
16 seasons in Visalia, Tulare on various fruits and
17 vegetables, and then when the summertime came along, we
18 picked grapes in Reedley, Parlier, Selma, Dinuba,
19 Kingsburg. That was our community of interest. And as
20 I was growing up in those areas, we moved to
21 Porterville. That same community of interest for farm
22 workers was still picking oranges from anywhere from
23 Porterville, Lindsay, Exeter. And then there are
24 various fruits in between there, grapes in Delano or
25 Earlimart, Ridgegrove.

1 I grew up in Tulare County for about 25 years
2 of my life. I graduated out of Porterville High School,
3 attended COS, graduated out of COS, spent a year at San
4 Jose State, finished my college at Cal State
5 Bakersfield. We moved out of Tulare County and moved to
6 Alameda County. We spent 22 years in Alameda County.

7 When me and my wife decided to move back to
8 Tulare County and plan our retirement back at home, the
9 reason why we decided is because our four children were
10 already grown and left the house. Two of them graduated
11 out of Berkeley. One joined the air force and came out
12 of the air force, and my fourth child is attending Sac
13 State right now, he's a junior at Sac State.

14 But when I came back to Tulare County, I came
15 back as, again, as a mortgage loan officer. One of the
16 things I did as a mortgage loan officer is I went back
17 and visited every city in Tulare County, drove thousands
18 of miles to refresh my memory of the cities and the
19 places so I could know what I'm talking about when I
20 talk to my clients about their particular community, as
21 to their homes, their streets, their gutters, their
22 infrastructure, all those things that banks take a look
23 at in making a mortgage loan to individuals.

24 It almost seems like when I left 22 years ago
25 and I came back a year and a half ago, it almost seems

1 like a step back into the past. Like things never
2 change. When I visit east Porterville, and those 22
3 years that I've been gone, not one improvement in those
4 streets. Tonyville, London, I could name all the little
5 towns and cities in Tulare County with no improvements
6 in those 22 years that I've been gone. And yet, when we
7 talk about listing the things that we need in our
8 community, we like to see our community as a whole. We
9 like to see Tulare County as a whole when you consider
10 your redistricting.

11 I can go along and give you a list of things
12 that are needed in Tulare County, and I believe in the
13 one person-one vote, and I hope that you keep in mind
14 Tulare County as a whole when you are planning on
15 redistricting. We have the same needs and concerns as
16 Fresno and Bakersfield. We have those same needs;
17 education, transportation, medical facilities,
18 infrastructure, all those things are important to us in
19 Tulare County.

20 And if you notice, I didn't mention my ethnic
21 background when we're talking about those issues because
22 it belonged to all of us all of us who live in Tulare
23 County. We'd like to see all of those things happen
24 there.

25 I'd like to thank you for giving me an

1 opportunity to speak, and I hope when you consider your
2 redistricting that you look at Tulare County as a whole
3 and not divide it. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. Salinas, for taking time to be with us here today.

6 Our next witness is from the American
7 Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees,
8 Judy Steinke. Is Ms. Steinke -- well, excuse me, I'm
9 sorry.

10 Before that, in any event, I don't see
11 Ms. Steinke, but before that we have apparently also
12 representing MALDEF, we have Mayor Victor P. Lopez of
13 the City of Orange Cove, California.

14 Mayor Lopez, please excuse me for
15 inadvertently not getting you up here as quickly as I
16 should have.

17 MAYOR LOPEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Members
18 of the Board. My name is Victor Lopez, I am the Mayor
19 of the City of Orange Cove. I have also been the past
20 chairman for the last eight years as Counsul of
21 Government representing 15 cities in the County of
22 Fresno, and I've also served as president of the Fresno
23 County LAVCO and president and vice chairman. I am also
24 one of the cofounders of Latino Caucus of the State of
25 California to the legal California cities. I've been

1 very involved in my communities, not only in Fresno
2 County, but throughout the state, throughout the nation,
3 and I have a great concern, and I want to thank you for
4 this opportunity to let us testify here, of the
5 importance of keeping communities of interest intact.

6 I'm real proud to be a voting member of the
7 31st District, and also the 16th Senatorial District
8 here in Fresno County, and of course, in the 4th
9 District of the County of Fresno for the Board of
10 Supervisors. And I'm asking you to please keep intact
11 the farm worker community, the interests of the farm
12 worker community. The people that are very low income,
13 disadvantaged community, the people with high
14 unemployment in this area. I strongly believe that we
15 can find solutions to our problems within the community
16 by having fair representation and having folks that will
17 truly represent the interests of our communities.

18 The Hispanic business community is growing
19 within our areas. I'd would like to see that that is
20 kept intact. This community's very important, not only
21 because of our culture, but because of our language and
22 our understanding of our needs in our communities.

23 Our communities have suffered tremendously.
24 For example, in Fresno County, you have five of the
25 poorest cities per capita in the State of California, in

1 the richest county in the nation, but you have the
2 poorest of the poorest, with high unemployment ranging
3 from 34 to about 54 percent unemployment in some of our
4 cities in this county. And we need to do things better
5 for those citizens that deserve a better life. Not only
6 in areas of housing, but education, economic
7 opportunities, because we have to change the face of
8 this nation, because things the way they are looking
9 here in this valley, and being named probably the second
10 Appalachia of this country is ridiculous, because we
11 have a beautiful county, a prosperous county, with a lot
12 of opportunity, but it's going to take communities of
13 interest to work together to make a better living for
14 all citizens that we all deserve.

15 Lack of housing, deplorable. It's not
16 acceptable. The unemployment, the lack of opportunity
17 is not acceptable. But we want you, Mr. Chairman and
18 Members of the Board to keep the communities of
19 interest, so that we one day can live like all human
20 beings should live, in a better environment, safe
21 environment, clean environment, with opportunities for
22 all.

23 And this opportunity that you've given us here
24 today is a tremendous opportunity. I have been in
25 office not only as city councilman for four years, but

1 I've been the Mayor of the City of Orange Cove for 20
2 years, and I believe we came from zero to now becoming a
3 community that's going to prosper.

4 We have provided opportunities in that
5 community not only with the most beautiful child care
6 center in the state of California in my community, we
7 just built a beautiful economic development job training
8 center that provides ESL classes, GED classes, child
9 development classes, accounting classes, we're getting
10 into law enforcement classes, we're getting into
11 medical. We're going to change the lives of those farm
12 workers of our community. We can do it. We served over
13 200 children in child care, 12-hour services, for those
14 hard working mother's, mothers who want to go back to
15 school, go back to training, and those children are in
16 safe environment, only happened because of good
17 representation, our representatives working together in
18 partnership, and going regional to provide those
19 opportunities.

20 I am happy to say today that Orange Cove is
21 the only city in the second round to be given a
22 designated economic development, which is called the
23 Federal Designation of Enterprise Community, the only
24 one in the State of California in the second round, and
25 I'm real proud of that. And that designation has

1 brought in millions of dollars to our community to
2 provide those opportunities that our citizens need.

3 But I believe the strongest force would be by
4 having true representation within our communities, and
5 we can do it by being fair and not diluting our
6 communities.

7 In 1990 I presented a lawsuit that I won
8 because deviation was not five percent, it was in the 80
9 percent deviation, and that's ridiculous, it's not
10 acceptable, and I won the lawsuit. But I'm here today
11 to say to you folks, yes, you can make America better
12 for all citizens. We're all in it together, and we're
13 all proud to be Americans, and I want to thank you and
14 God bless you for this opportunity. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
16 Mayor Lopez, we appreciate you taking the time to be
17 here.

18 And now is Ms. Judy Steinke present? Ms. Judy
19 Steinke? Okay. Apparently not. If she comes back in,
20 we'll recognize her.

21 I have from the Merced County Farm Bureau, is
22 there someone who has been here representing the Merced
23 County Farm Bureau? I didn't have a name. I just had
24 an indication someone was coming.

25 Okay. We will move on to, I have the people

1 who have signed in today to speak, and my first one is
2 Stephen F. Rico. Mr. Rico, you have the microphone.

3 Again, if you can, for the court reporters,
4 spell your name when you first step forward.

5 MR. RICO: Stephen F. Rico. S-T-E-P-H-E-N,
6 F., R-I-C-O. I'm also still currently the candidate for
7 the 25th State Assembly, up to November 2001, and I was
8 the higher candidate for the 25th State Assembly. And
9 I'm also on the Madera Democrats Central Committee,
10 board member. I'm also on 25th, 80 Executive board
11 member, and I also belong to the Fresno Madera Chamber
12 of Commerce and the Golden Valley Chamber of Commerce
13 which is on 41 in Madera County, or which is by Valley
14 Children's Hospital. I also belong to the San Joaquin
15 Parkway, support member, and I belong to the Madera
16 Economic Commission, and also am affiliated with the
17 California Youth Authority as a substance abuse
18 counselor, and I also assist my wife now too with the
19 new University of California, Los Angeles Cancer Clinic
20 here in Fresno, which just started up for everyone's
21 information.

22 My, our recommendations, by which I mean our
23 recommendations, will be from the Madera constituent and
24 central committee there, is that we will be forwarding,
25 via e-mail, our recommendations discussing

1 consolidation, and of course splitting the specific
2 community interests, which is important to us. And to
3 be specific, it's for us, it's to get significant
4 representation from Sacramento for our, for our
5 district.

6 Now the questions we are going to define on
7 that recommendation to this committee is that is this
8 committee willing to represent or reapportion the vote
9 in favor for us in the 25th, which consists of the
10 majority of us, the anglos, blacks, Native Americans,
11 Portuguese, Asians Hmongs, and most importantly, the
12 Hispanic population of democrats in the 25th State
13 Assembly.

14 To do this, of course, to get a significant
15 representation is, frankly and straight to this
16 committee, is are you willing to draw the lines, the
17 districts, to funnel the funds in order for us to win
18 this assembly seat? That's the most important thing,
19 straightforward to you here.

20 And of course, I've been listening to the
21 other, my other colleagues talking. At first I thought
22 it was more, of course, they didn't want to change the
23 balance or maintain the community interest on the same
24 lines, but hearing Mr. Salinas and Mayor Lopez, and also
25 Mr. Thao from the Hmong Association, it seems that they

1 are interested in the new lines of the redistricting as
2 well, so it's a half and half. It's very important for
3 us that we do have that, and that we look at it.

4 And in order for the majority party which is,
5 of course, right now in the state capitol, is for us to
6 really look into this issue right here, and the fact may
7 be that it may consist of, to do this is realigning the
8 lines and looking at the other districts of the 26th,
9 the 30th and the 31st.

10 Now, this sounds preposterous to you and says
11 how can we do that, because there are other democratic
12 incumbents on that. Well, the only other alternative
13 you can say to yourself is that, and it's something
14 that's been spoken, is that you completely write us off,
15 and definitely we're not going to do that. Mayor Flores
16 said that strongly because the percentages are really
17 off balance and therefore we would go to that.

18 But I'm imploring you to review the last
19 election for the 25th and see the results and events
20 that transpired, and assess for yourself how close we
21 came to winning the 25th. I mean from a usual and
22 regular vote that we get 35,000 on the general election,
23 I was able to bring it up to 55,000. I mean, even
24 Mr. Skaarups here, who didn't think we could do it, was
25 surprised himself. But the point is that this committee

1 really needs to, really seriously request, review this
2 whole situation and see that it is possible that we can
3 get this 25th for ourselves and have representation that
4 we need to outline the communities that need support
5 here.

6 Now, Assemblyman Leonard has said, of course,
7 we need information to understand better the results
8 that happened in these areas, or what do these community
9 interests have involved here, of course, in the e-mail
10 report we will send you of our recommendations, I will
11 be glad to send you anything that you need as far as
12 election results, from the results of polls that are
13 indicating, showing that we could have won this race,
14 and the people of the 25th need this representation very
15 badly.

16 Now, once again, the redrawing of the lines is
17 very important. I cannot see no other way but to do
18 that fairly, of course, I'm not saying this should be
19 sarcastic, but in the event of fair balance for
20 representation for us in the 25th, that means for you
21 gentleman, I'm sure you know, of course, but just to
22 reiterate, the 25th does consist of parts of Stanislaus,
23 parts of Tuolumne, mostly all of Madera, all of Mariposa
24 County, and parts of Fresno. Specifically, where I live
25 at now, if you look at the map here, on your side to my

1 left and to your right, you'll see in the 25th we come
2 all the way to Fresno, to Herndon Avenue, and into
3 Madera on 41. That area in the next two to five years
4 will consist of development, which you have Rio Mesa and
5 Castle and Cook coming in, that development will be so
6 much, the population increase in there will be as big as
7 the size of the City of Visalia, twice the size of the
8 City of Madera, so if you look at that, two to five
9 years is nothing where you compare it to the political
10 arena, so there once again, I implore you to review and
11 assess our recommendations, which we will e-mail to you.
12 If you have any questions, Sirs, I will take them. If
13 not, Thank you very much for your time.

14 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much. We
15 appreciate you taking the time to come here, Mr. Rico.

16 And our next witness is Mr. Dave Wilson from
17 VFW Local 1280, I believe. No, I'm sorry, excuse me,
18 no, no, no, UFW, United Farm Workers.

19 MR. WILSON: Fair enough, United Food and
20 Commercial Workers,

21 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: United Food and
22 Commercial Workers. UFCW.

23 MR. WILSON: UFCW, yeah.

24 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: I just can't see the C
25 there.

1 MR. WILSON: Well, I'm a lousy writer, but --

2 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: That's okay. That's
3 quite all right.

4 MR. WILSON: Okay. My name is David Wilson
5 and I'm with the United Food and Commercial Workers
6 Local, and thank you Mr. Chairman for coming to Fresno
7 and having a hearing. I didn't realize that we could do
8 this in writing too. Being the, as you mentioned, the
9 bashful guy I am, I will be sending this in writing too,
10 but I just wanted to mention to all of you how strongly
11 we would like to see some changes made in the
12 congressional districts in this area.

13 We need an urban, with an urban mentality,
14 congressional district in south of Gary Condit, and
15 we're going to work very, very hard to ask you to join
16 with us and do that, to give us that strongly urban
17 district that we need, includes more of the City of
18 Fresno and the cities, the major cities in the Valley.

19 To do that, I understand we have to talk about
20 communities of interest and what not, and what the state
21 regulation along with the State Federation of Labor will
22 be putting in a paper, I know, to various committees,
23 and we will be a part of doing that, but I did want to
24 come here today and say we are strongly looking at those
25 congressional districts and would ask you to do the same

1 thing here in the Valley. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
3 Mr. Wilson. Appreciate it.

4 Our next witness, Mr. John Ryle or Riley. And
5 before we do that, do you want to take a break? Going
6 to take a five minute break? Oh, take a break in five
7 minutes, in about five minutes. All right. Then
8 Mr. Ryle, is he present? R-Y-L-E. We will recognize
9 Mr. Ryle if he comes up later.

10 Do I have the next one? Mr. Jay Hubbell?
11 Mr. Jay Hubbell present? Okay, if not. Oh, he is
12 coming, okay.

13 A. My name is Jay Hubbell, it's spelled J-A-Y,
14 H-U-B-B-E-L-L. I represent Fresno Stonewall Democrats.
15 Fresno Stonewall Democrats is a part of national
16 organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender
17 democrats with over 10,000 members in 60 affiliated
18 clubs across the country.

19 We are committed to improving the record of
20 the democratic party and educating voters about the vast
21 difference that exists between the two major parties on
22 issues of importance to our communities. And I just
23 want to surmise that listening to everybody speak today,
24 it's all about inclusion. Every speaker, every
25 representative of every group is concerned about the

1 people they represent being included, and the group that
2 I represent is no less concerned about this process.
3 And I just want to say that I empathize with all the
4 other speakers, and I would support their sense of
5 wishing for inclusion in considering the redistricting
6 process. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Hubbell. We appreciate your taking the time to be
9 here.

10 I'll just double check real quickly, is
11 Mr. Ryle or Riley here? All right. Do we have time for
12 one more before the break, or do you want to go to the
13 break? All right. We're going to go ahead and take a
14 break for five minutes. People need to use restrooms or
15 step out for a moment, members of one of our minority
16 groups is smokers, you can step outside, and we'll
17 resume in about five minutes. Thank you.

18 (Whereupon a recess was taken.)

19 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: We're ready to reconvene.
20 Let me just double check one more time for Mr. Ryle, who
21 is, I believe, the principal assistant for Assemblyman
22 Mike Briggs. Mr. Ryle or Riley? Okay. We will
23 recognize him later if he returns.

24 Our next person who had requested an
25 opportunity to speak is Venancio Gaona, and please

1 forgive me if I mispronounce your name. I'm apologizing
2 ahead of time. If you can correct my pronunciation and
3 for the record spell it as well, I would appreciate it.
4 Thank you.

5 MR. GAONA: No, you did honorably well. And
6 again, my name is Venancio Gaona, capital
7 V-E-N-A-N-C-I-O, G-A-O-N-A.

8 First of all, a little bit about myself. I am
9 here representing the Concillio de Fresno, an umbrella
10 organization in metropolitan Fresno, and also Concerned
11 Citizens for Representative Government. The Concillio
12 de Fresno is an advocate for the socioeconomic,
13 educational and political empowerment of Spanish
14 speaking people in this area, metropolitan area.

15 Concerned Citizens for Representative
16 Government tries to get Chicano-Latinos involved in
17 politics at every level.

18 I'm a retired educator of 37 years. I have
19 taught in middle and high schools. I have taught part
20 time at the university, and of course, full time 37
21 years. Of those 37, 30 years at Fresno City College. I
22 taught 14 of those 30 years, and 16 I was a director of
23 the Extended Opportunity Program and Services, which
24 assists low income and/or under prepared students. When
25 I left the program, my program -- I shouldn't say mine,

1 I'm beginning to sound like Bush -- our college had the
2 fourth largest program in the State of California.
3 That's quite an achievement for a community college from
4 the Central San Joaquin Valley.

5 I pretty much grew up in Bakersfield,
6 California, and I am proud to say that I am, I really
7 appreciate the educational system of the United States.
8 Without it, I would not be standing here before you.
9 That enabled me to make something of my life.

10 My parents were farm workers. I, of course,
11 worked also until the age of 19 in the fields of
12 California, especially in Kern County. You name it, I
13 picked it. You name it and I pruned it. Well, I didn't
14 prune everything, but some things I did.

15 I stand here before you to speak about the
16 importance of redistricting and the role that you play
17 as legislators or the legislature. Our recommendations
18 are that if you are going, as you move through the
19 process of redistricting, that you consider the
20 significance of the Voting Rights Act, as it impacts
21 many people who aspire to become full citizens and
22 participate in our form of democracy by registering to
23 vote, voting on the day of election, especially as it
24 concerns education of their children.

25 Your role, our role, is to inform, to educate,

1 this is my educational background coming out, to educate
2 citizens about their role in society, but they must
3 seek, they must have hope, and you are the people that
4 can provide that redemption, because there are many
5 institutions in the State of California that provide the
6 means for other people.

7 Insurance companies can pay a lobbyist.
8 Farmers can have their own cooperative, the Farm Bureau
9 or whatever, and they can also seek and receive modern
10 technology through the University of California. I
11 can't ask the University of California to develop
12 something for farm workers to help them ameliorate their
13 lives. Redemption in the form of redistricting, that
14 they too will not only have a representative that is
15 going to address their needs, but is going to be their
16 lobbyist.

17 Bakersfield -- excuse me, Visalia has four
18 assembly people that pretty much touch its people.
19 Fresno has three assembly people that pretty much touch
20 its area.

21 By the way, I'm not going to give you
22 statistics or many names. I'm going to speak in very
23 general terms.

24 What we need, then, is a representative that
25 is going to address compactness, and is going to address

1 the community of interest of the people, that is going
2 to radiate from a town of either Bakersfield or
3 Bakersfield area, Kern County, Visalia or Tulare, and
4 someone in Fresno for Fresno area people. Someone who
5 is not going to be split. Someone who may be able to
6 address those special interests in Sacramento, and be
7 overpowered by northern California and southern
8 California at times, but yet be able to address those
9 needs of the people in such areas of community of
10 interest, such as the economic discrepancies of the
11 area; the high unemployment; double-digit unemployment
12 in Tulare County, here in Fresno County; the monumental
13 language problems of our students, limited English
14 speakers.

15 It is not a sin for the student not to
16 necessarily be able to master English. I haven't
17 mastered it myself yet. But I think that we have a
18 responsibility as citizens, as tax payers, as quote, the
19 people who have vision, and try to prepare for the
20 future, and layout long-range, medium and short-range
21 plans, to take care of the problems of language in our
22 schools, literacy, unemployment, under employment,
23 housing.

24 I think that you have all read about, some of
25 you perhaps, because you are not from this area, of

1 hospitals closing, or apparently near closing. We need
2 people who are going to address those needs of community
3 of interest for our areas, and not have representatives
4 that are going to be split in terms of who they are
5 going to address, or whose interests they are going to
6 address.

7 Our brothers and sisters earlier from the
8 Asian American and Pacific Islander Network of Central
9 California spoke of the many needs already. We
10 recognize that there are many brothers and sisters,
11 African-American as well, Native Americans, who are
12 disseminated, that reside in many areas of our cities of
13 the Central San Joaquin, and in particular, a community
14 such as Fresno, they are not as concentrated as perhaps
15 one group or another.

16 We need that representative that is going to
17 take into account the compactness, the interest of those
18 communities in the redistricting area that you will
19 develop, that whether we wish to acknowledge it or not,
20 there are now cultural identities of people, festivals,
21 schools, celebrations. That must be addressed, as well.
22 Maybe we didn't do it a long time ago, but we're doing
23 it now. So therefore, the Voting Rights Act is
24 significant. It is important in terms of giving hope,
25 of redeeming people so that they can say my vote counts,

1 someone, he, she, will listen to me.

2 A good example of this is, I can remember an
3 instructor of mine at California State University,
4 Fresno, it was known as Fresno State at the time, who
5 talked about how every year in the County of Fresno,
6 farm workers were killed at railroad crossings until a
7 very prominent person in Fresno got killed, then they
8 decided to put up those railroad electrical signals.

9 Recently, we have had legislation, due to the
10 efforts of a community of interest, of someone who, two
11 people who cared about farm worker issues, and initiated
12 and passed legislation that addressed the dangers of
13 farm workers traveling in vans, and I'm speaking
14 specifically of Assembly Woman Sarah Reyes and Assembly
15 Person Dean Flores. That's what we need. We need
16 people who address issues, whether they be housing,
17 economic, underdevelopment.

18 We can't have a prison built in Wasco,
19 McFarland, Corcoran, as the only hope of these
20 communities to bring in quote, unquote, light industry
21 or industry. That's warehousing.

22 What we need is people who are going to
23 address and recognize and work with the community in
24 trying to solve problems.

25 There are too many deficiencies in education.

1 I'm not going to stand here and talk about the SAT 9,
2 and what people do with it, or in order to pass those
3 tests. What we need, again, is people who respect the
4 differences, who recognize the community of interest of
5 the various groups of people that populate our society;
6 that if we want to make them productive citizens, if we
7 want them to vote, then we must give them that hope that
8 someone will listen to them, and not necessarily screen
9 their phone calls and say give this to the
10 administrative aide such and such, and no, tell them
11 that I can't meet with their community, or I can't meet
12 with them on Saturday, that sort of thing. We need
13 people who are going to be responsive.

14 In conclusion, it is in your hands, in our
15 hands, to empower people, to inform people, to educate
16 people, the public. We have recent immigrants, we have
17 recent immigrant citizens, excuse me, recent immigrants
18 who have become citizens due to legislation. We have
19 undocumented workers, undocumented people. We have to
20 be the leaders. You have to be those who provide that
21 vision, and provide that redistricting that is going to
22 bring people together, not divide people by various
23 means of having a corridor of an assembly person that
24 runs from Fresno all the way to Bakersfield, and it
25 takes him two hours to drive and see his constituency.

1 There must be compactness of these districts. Thank you
2 very much.

3 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Gaona. Now you will be able to, having participated
5 in this discussion, add to the list of things you have
6 pruned, assembly districts, by giving us input that will
7 be valuable as we go about that, and I appreciate it.

8 Next, our next witness, I hope I'm reading the
9 handwriting right, Mr. George Findley? Sir, did I
10 pronounce it correct?

11 MR. FINLEY: Finley, F-I-N-L-E-Y, very
12 uncommon name. I'm George Finley. I'm from Fresno,
13 California, and I'm very active in my community, and I
14 want to say to all of you, I know you've got a job that
15 you don't like to do, but you are willing to do it, and
16 that's great.

17 I'm from the south, raised and educated in
18 Alabama, and voting is one of the things that we're not
19 allowed unless you could pay the poll tax, and then when
20 they did give you a chance to vote, they would move it
21 from one place to another. But I want to say to all of
22 you, I'm grateful that when you talk about
23 redistricting, think about the people that live in those
24 areas, think about the people that are serving the
25 people in those areas now, not tomorrow, and work with

1 them, and see that they are not removed from the
2 district that they represent.

3 It is unfortunate that sometimes, whether you
4 are republican or whether you are democrat, you try to
5 put the number of people in those districts so they can
6 get the vote. I'm going to ask you to take a look at
7 that, and get the best person that's going to be running
8 in those districts, and not set it up for a particular
9 party.

10 It is not fair to the citizens of the State of
11 California to be able to have a democrat in an area and
12 a republican in another area. We should be all working
13 for one common goal, the good of the people, and I hope
14 that's in your mind when you start doing redistricting.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much for
17 taking the time to join us, Mr. Finley. We appreciate
18 it very much.

19 Our next, next witness is, again, excuse me if
20 I'm misreading here, Mr. John Harris, Jr. And this is,
21 I'm just trying to make sure I read the last, the
22 representative of the State Education Share of the
23 NAACP? Okay. We will, if the person comes back in a
24 little bit, we will recognize them shortly.

25 Okay, I have next, Eric Quinley. Mr. Eric

1 Quinley?

2 MR. QUINLEY: My name is Eric Quinley,
3 E-R-I-C, last name is Quinley, Q-U-I-N-L-E-Y.
4 Mr. Chairman, committee members and local assemblymen
5 and women, thank you for allowing me to speak to you
6 this afternoon. I am a state wide political director
7 for the California College Republicans, and I reside in
8 the City of Visalia in Tulare County, so obviously this
9 area is of special importance to me. I feel that by
10 being a resident of this area of Tulare County, I have a
11 special knowledge of some of the particular needs and
12 dynamics that are unique to this area.

13 This community of interest shares many
14 problems, such as one of the highest teen birth rates in
15 California, one of the highest rates of unemployment in
16 the state, and also one of the lowest per capita income
17 levels in California.

18 There are three major cities that make up this
19 community of interest. These cities are Visalia,
20 Porterville and Tulare. In a recent study published a
21 few weeks ago, these three cities were literally at the
22 bottom of the list of economic standing in over 300
23 United States cities and rural areas. I urge you and
24 your committee not to overlook this community of
25 interest in your redistricting plans. It is imperative

1 to keep this community of interest united so that our
2 elected officials, along with the community and
3 business leaders can work together to aim at improving
4 the quality of life for these community residents. Once
5 again, thank you for allowing me to testify today.

6 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much for
7 coming here and taking the time to share your
8 information with us, as well. We appreciate it,
9 Mr. Quinley.

10 Let me ask if I have Myser Keele, last name
11 K-E-E-L-E, I believe. And if you can correct me, sir,
12 on pronunciation, and make sure to spell the name for
13 the record.

14 MR. KEELS: My name is Myser Keels, and I
15 represent the, want me to spell it? M-Y-S-E-R, James,
16 J-A-M-E-S, K-E-E-L-S. And I have been a resident of
17 southwest Fresno since 1953. I've voted in each
18 election since obtaining voting age. I didn't, we just
19 kind of put this together, I didn't know it was supposed
20 to, so forgive me for kind of stumbling over it.

21 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: You are doing just fine.
22 Go right ahead and be comfortable, sir.

23 MR. KEELS: So we will put it together and see
24 that you get it, and I thank you for allowing me the
25 opportunity to speak to you all this afternoon.

1 I was a student at Edison High School in
2 southwest Fresno from grade 7 to 12, graduated in 1958.
3 After serving three years in the US Army, I returned to
4 Fresno, first working in a furniture store, and then to
5 Fresno County in 1964, and I retired from Fresno County
6 in 1995, when I retired, and they gave a golden
7 handshake, so I left.

8 Prior to my retirement I was already involved
9 in the local community organizations and all of the
10 things looking at what should be, what has happened --
11 let me go this way with it. In 1968, '68, '69 I think
12 was the biggest two graded years of that, a group of,
13 organization in Fresno called Mile Cities came in west
14 Fresno and tore all of these things down that wasn't up
15 to code, including the grocery stores, and so I looked
16 at that a long time. It's always been on my mind, and
17 especially when they said they were going to build
18 another grocery store in west Fresno, and there were
19 some stores that came in and only, didn't last because
20 they didn't have enough finances, they wasn't
21 financially fit to be able to give people any kind of
22 benefit from it, so they came and closed. We had a
23 couple pretty large stores, three stores that did that.

24 But anyway, so in order for us to have, get
25 any kind of decent break or cut on our, anything from as

1 far as stores is concerned, we would have to journey
2 over on to the other side of town. And this has been
3 taking place ever since then. Let's see. But anyway,
4 what I'll go on with this thing here.

5 I'm the president of Black Political Council,
6 Edison Southwest Fresno City Planning and Advisory
7 Committee, Fresno Neighborhood Alliance, Fresno
8 Revitalization Cooperation, Fresno Growth Alliance,
9 board president of West Fresno Coalition for Economic
10 Development, that's our economic development, our
11 organization that we formed, and that started back in
12 the end of '94 when we formed that organization, and two
13 or three other names we had to keep changing. But we
14 are in the process of, we'll be serving west Fresno as
15 an economic development organization. And, let's see.
16 Oh and also I'm a deacon at Saint Joseph Baptist Church
17 in cooperation, and that's where we were having most of
18 our meetings at.

19 I'm also, something that we're doing right
20 now, presently doing right now is doing a collaborative
21 with Valley Children's Hospital, Sequoia Health Clinic
22 and a lot of some other community organizations. And
23 what we're doing is Valley Children's is going to put a,
24 we're going to, with the collaborative, put the clinic
25 in west Fresno, and so we're working with that. We'll

1 be hiring directly for that clinic pretty soon, and
2 hopefully we'll have a nice clinic that will slow some
3 of this going way over downtown. You know, our
4 transportation is really poor in west Fresno also,
5 because a lot of poor folks that just don't have the
6 things that most of us take for granted.

7 I'm going to go back on over this. But
8 anyway, after the first year we started the correlation,
9 the social security building that was in shopping center
10 in west Fresno there had asbestos in the ceiling, and
11 they were going to remove their people and they were
12 going to either fix it or they were going to move out of
13 west Fresno. So the man that owned the property said he
14 wasn't going to fix it, so they were going to move and
15 so we lobbied for a social security building, and after
16 we finally, we got that social security building in less
17 than a little over a year. But the shopping center, we
18 spent a lot of time here at this podium right here, and
19 those seats right there, and we acquired that shopping
20 center. Eventually we got the store, anchorage store,
21 Food 4 Less, which is doing very well, and anchorage
22 store, they opened, I believe it was the 23rd of
23 December, right in that area, in 1999. See, so it
24 wasn't just walk in and grocery store goes up. They
25 just took a brand new one up on north side of town last

1 year, didn't want it there, so they moved it, but to get
2 that shopping center there, it took an arm, a leg and a
3 whole lot of work. But anyway, that's the kind of
4 things that goes on.

5 And I'm a member of a whole lot of
6 organizations in southwest Fresno, that we're still
7 working. And also, that shopping center there, they
8 gave the development department an award for. It was in
9 March, in March, they gave an award for economic
10 development last year, or not last, this year, in March.

11 But anyway, they, like I said, it was hard
12 getting it, but it was, it's doing tremendous, very well
13 in the community. It helps an awful lot, but there's a
14 lot more things we need to do. Our transportation isn't
15 like it's supposed to be. Buses, they move the time
16 further into the evening, but still, all of it helps,
17 but it's not like it's supposed to be.

18 But anyway, we are collaborating, cooperating
19 with other organizations, work together with other
20 organizations. We are, we'll be doing a program for
21 California Endowment and Rockefeller Foundation. And
22 the name of the program that we'll be doing for three
23 years at \$150,000 per year is called Cal Works for
24 Better Health. And their philosophy is a working person
25 is a happier, healthier person, and so then we'll be

1 doing that program and that may be extended, could be as
2 they said, could possibly be extended up to ten years or
3 maybe, whatever, if we get that information, and the
4 programs are working like they are supposed to work.

5 But we have an opportunity to start being able
6 to help our folks in some ways, and we're going to take
7 advantage of that program and do as much as we can. And
8 we're just, as I said, a new organization formed. We're
9 not new, but we're a new formed organization, and we
10 have to thank them for financing us partly so we can do
11 some more work in west Fresno. But you heard some of
12 the other organizations that are, one or two there, even
13 you Asian Americans that you heard, we work with them
14 also. Fresno's leadership, Catholic charities,
15 therefore our organization's been doing the program for
16 Cal Works for Better Health.

17 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Was there anything you
18 wanted to share with us with regard to redistricting,
19 with regard to the lines?

20 MR. KEELS: Well, our district right now,
21 it's -- well, let me look at it this way. If you look
22 at the situation this way, where it needs, like I say,
23 they tore all of these things down, and they didn't come
24 back and build them, and there's been no, this is the
25 first anything that's been built over here in west

1 Fresno since '68 and '69, and I'd like you, like I said,
2 you know, how long it took to get this shopping center,
3 you know.

4 Okay, now -- now, oh, another thing, we have a
5 plant down here, Sunset Waste Paper, waste disposal
6 place, they just put a seven million dollar building
7 right here on Elm down here. That is the next thing.
8 It's almost ready to open now, and they have a contract
9 with the City, and they are presently asked them if they
10 would extend that contract, because they'll be hiring
11 people, 43 people out of the community, and other than
12 Food 4 Less, which they said they would hire their
13 people, as many as they could, from 93706, so we have a
14 few people, the ones that are working at the shopping
15 center in that particular store that came from west
16 Fresno.

17 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Mr. Keels, we appreciate
18 very much your interest in those subjects. Today we're
19 actually trying to get information on where people feel
20 communities of interest are in connection with drawing
21 lines for redistricting.

22 Was there anything you could share with us
23 with regard to where lines should or shouldn't be drawn,
24 or how communities should be held together? Any
25 information related to that broad subject matter?

1 MR. KEELS: I think it should be did equally,
2 but the thing is, see, west Fresno, they have not been
3 in no big hurry to build west Fresno area up because
4 it's been blight area to get government money to work,
5 and if we don't put something over there for the people
6 to live in, it's still going to stay like that, unless
7 we can solicit enough organizations to come in.

8 As I said, it took that long to get a shopping
9 center. I'll be dead and gone by the time they get
10 anything else in there probably. But that's what I'm
11 saying, if you draw your lines and redistrict, and you
12 draw them that way, there's nothing out there but farms.
13 How you get them, if you don't count people, what good
14 is it going to do me, I mean, or our area? Okay, so
15 when you start redistricting by people, how many live in
16 these particular places, where it's been controlled
17 growth, I would say it's controlled growth because the
18 only growth you put in there is what they want in there.

19 Now it might be getting to be they are going
20 to put some more in there because water's right out
21 there. So where are they going to get their water from?
22 So now maybe they'll put some houses in west Fresno, but
23 up until now there hadn't been a whole lot gone into
24 west Fresno.

25 But, you see, that's what I say. You talk

1 about unequally proportioned, that bothers me. And west
2 Fresno has been unequally proportioned for ever since I
3 came here, and it's still that way, and that's why I was
4 so interested in the type of an organization that I
5 have, because if there's any way I can, we'll build
6 something there in west Fresno that will make us be
7 proportioned to things that benefit west Fresno, instead
8 of going all the way across town to get it.

9 So that's all I can say about it, so I wish
10 there was a way you could redistrict that to get
11 something in west Fresno, to be able to attract people
12 to west Fresno, and live.

13 You know, everything don't happen in southwest
14 Fresno, but if you listen to newspaper and what goes on
15 TV and that stuff, you think everything happens over
16 there. It happens all over the city, but most of it
17 they try to put it happens in west Fresno, so we got to
18 have some help in west Fresno. So however you divide it
19 up or move these lines around, I wish you could move it
20 somewhere so it would be also beneficial to west Fresno
21 and some of southwest Fresno.

22 And this is the thing, I have no solution for
23 it, but you all have the solution, and I appreciate you
24 listening to me. But I hope you understand if you don't
25 make it so you get some people there, if you are talking

1 about people is the ones that's concerned where we
2 divide these things, then you need to put some more
3 people there, or what can we do? Or just leave it like
4 it is? Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Keels for taking the time to join us, thank you.

7 My next witness is Mr. Juan Arambula,
8 Supervisor for Fresno County, Supervisor Arambula.

9 SUPERVISOR ARAMBULA: Yes, somebody once said,
10 if you call me anything just call me for dinner.

11 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Me gusta mucho el sonido
12 de espanol, pero busco muy dificil a entenderlo porque
13 no hablo nunguna palabra de esta idioma.

14 SUPERVISOR ARAMBULA: Well, you did quite
15 well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and assembly members for
16 holding this hearing here in Fresno. As the author,
17 Gerald Haslem once described it, and wrote a book about
18 it, it's called the other California. And I just wanted
19 to share with you some unique characteristics of the San
20 Joaquin Valley.

21 It's been said that if the San Joaquin Valley
22 was carved out from roughly Kern County up to Stanislaus
23 and formed a new state of the union, that our per capita
24 income would rank 50th out of all of the United States.

25 We have some unique characteristics that we

1 hope that you will consider in drawing the boundary
2 lines for the new districts. And we hope that you will
3 focus on communities of interest, and specifically, I
4 would like to suggest for your consideration that we
5 look at income and poverty levels. Just in Fresno
6 County alone, of the top five poorest cities in the
7 state, we have three here in Fresno County. And yet, in
8 many ways, Fresno County is no different than some other
9 surrounding areas that rely primarily on agriculture. I
10 would urge you to take a look at factors such as
11 education levels, factors such as access to health care
12 and others which I think describe many of the
13 difficulties that we are trying to address here in the
14 San Joaquin Valley.

15 We hope you will look at compactness of
16 districts. We hope that you will look at competitive
17 districts, so that no one is locked out, no group, no
18 significant number of individuals who share interests
19 will be, will have their vote diluted or be unable to
20 make their voice heard with their elected
21 representatives.

22 In short, Mr. Chairman and Members, we hope
23 that you will help us to increase our ability to
24 continue electing representatives who are responsive to
25 our needs, the needs of the other California. Thank

1 you.

2 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
3 Supervisor, for taking the time and trouble to come here
4 today.

5 Before I proceed any further, I want to
6 welcome Assembly Member Mike Briggs, who has joined us
7 here. Assembly members, when they first got here, made
8 a few remarks. If you'd like to share something, you
9 don't have to, but you are welcome to.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN BRIGGS: I'll make a short
11 statement. First of all, I never thought I'd be sitting
12 up here again.

13 I'd like to comment, I want to address
14 Mr. Keels' concerns before I go, but first, I just want
15 to give a talk about the Valley or this region of the
16 Valley, just a little bit. My area, the Assembly
17 District, the 29th District, is Fresno County and Tulare
18 County, 75 percent of my district is in Fresno County,
19 which is Fresno and Clovis, and 25 percent of my
20 district is in Tulare County, which is Visalia, Woodlake
21 Exeter, Farmersville and Three Rivers, and some other
22 smaller cities.

23 First let me say something about Tulare
24 County. Tulare County has never had their own
25 representative in the state legislature, somebody

1 elected from Tulare County, and I've long been an
2 advocate that Tulare County should have a Tulare County
3 Center District. Doesn't have to take all of Tulare
4 County, maybe Tulare Kings, or some spilled a little
5 over into Kern, but a place where somebody from Tulare
6 County would have a chance to get elected to that
7 district. I think it's time that Tulare County has an
8 elected representative, and I think a district should be
9 drawn to give them a chance to have that, to give them a
10 strong enough person to be elected.

11 Now, I want to talk about this area of Fresno,
12 Kings and Tulare. Fresno County and Tulare County, we
13 get less in state resources than most other areas of the
14 state. Our schools get less than other areas of the
15 state. We get less money for roads than other areas of
16 the state. I don't want to say we are under-represented
17 in quality of representatives, but we are
18 under-represented as compared to other areas of the
19 state, such as Los Angeles or San Francisco.

20 I learned that lesson, because I went to
21 Sacramento to reform the whole system. First day we go
22 to get sworn in, they ask us to stand up by county and
23 get sworn in. So they call Fresno, I get sworn in.
24 They get to Los Angeles County and everybody else in the
25 room stands up. A good portion are from Los Angeles,

1 and I think as a result of that, Fresno ends up getting
2 less and Tulare County ends up getting less, year after
3 year in schools, roads and resources. I just hope the
4 assembly districts are shaped so the communities of
5 interest can be stronger in this area. The area Myser
6 Keels spoke about -- as I said, Fresno gets less than
7 the rest of the state, southwest Fresno and Chinatown
8 gets less than the rest of the city. They get a
9 shortage of the rest of the resources. I hope I helped
10 get the shopping center. And so I hope we can keep
11 areas of interest together such as Tulare County so they
12 can start showing up more on the state wide stage.

13 And Fresno, I think we have maybe five
14 assembly members, splitting up parts of Fresno, and
15 that's certainly one area of interest. And let me say
16 this, that when we get to this reapportionment, I hope
17 the agriculture community comes through very strongly.
18 Our entire economy is based on agriculture here in
19 Fresno and Tulare County throughout the San Joaquin
20 Valley, and agriculture's voice in Sacramento has not
21 been strong because we have not been strong in numbers,
22 and I hope by the end of this reapportionment,
23 agriculture comes through with a very strong voice. And
24 I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, you took the time to come to
25 Fresno. And I've talked to so many people in Fresno who

1 have sent a representative, and just appreciate you took
2 the time to come here. And John Ryle from my staff is
3 here, and he's been monitoring most of the days, so I
4 didn't know if he wanted to say anything or just wanted
5 to be acknowledged. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much. We
7 appreciate you joining us, Mr. Briggs and if Mr. Ryle
8 wanted to add, he's certainly able to. We assume
9 Mr. Briggs that you came --

10 MR. RYLE: My name's John Ryle, and I'm
11 principal assistant for Assemblyman Briggs, and I read
12 your report here, and two words that jumped out here are
13 fair and orderly redistricting. As a point of
14 discussion, I was special assistant to Senator Maddy in
15 the '80's, and I watched the destruction of the
16 districts. The sad thing I hated to see was that these
17 districts meandered all over, all over every where. I
18 think we had eight assembly districts within our last
19 assembly district, and it's just so very hard to serve
20 the public and provide good representation. So if
21 nothing else, I hope we do this in the interest of voter
22 reform. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
24 Mr. Ryle. And I was going to say, Mr. Briggs, we assume
25 you come, Mr. Leonard sent out the call for

1 reinforcements after we had a highly partisan bit of
2 testimony from Mr. Reed earlier, and we did get
3 Mr. Quinley from the College of Republicans, but I think
4 Mr. Leonard's feeling lonely up here, so we appreciate
5 having another republican up on the panel, we appreciate
6 it. And we certainly have been hearing a great deal
7 about the interest of agriculture today, we appreciate
8 that. May want to redraw this part of the map with a
9 plow, just to kind of reflect that.

10 We have the next, let me double check if
11 Mr. Harris had shown up from the NAACP.

12 Okay. And then had Mr. Gerald Salazar, and if
13 you can, just for the record, Mr. Salazar, spell your
14 name in full for the court reporter before you begin.
15 Thank you.

16 MR. SALAZAR: My name is Gerald Salazar,
17 S-A-L-A-Z-A-R, and I'm happy to be here today. I am a
18 Republican, so Mr. Leonard and Mr. Briggs are not the
19 only ones. And it's great to see you are doing a great
20 job, Mr. Briggs.

21 I'm here to stress, I've heard compelling
22 testimony from other citizens. I was born and raised in
23 Fresno, I work in Tulare, Kings, Fresno County, Kings
24 County. I work for an outfit that we own and operate a
25 power plant. We service 1,200,000 acres with ag water.

1 I also have the same sentiments that these
2 people came up and spoke with today. I too remember as
3 a kid going down to Delano, visit my cousins. Well, we
4 were sent to go work in picking stone fruit, picking
5 grapes, or whatever was in season. Went to school in
6 Fresno, Fresno State. I too see the high crime, the
7 unemployment, high unemployment, not enough jobs, high
8 dropout rates. My wife's a school teacher, she sees it
9 all the time. My main concern is the congressional
10 lines that are going to be drawn, the redistricting,
11 especially District 20. I ask that we are fair and we
12 do take in consideration and not lock out maybe a
13 different party that can do some of the things that were
14 promised maybe 12 years ago. That was why I'm up here
15 today, and I really appreciate that opportunity to come
16 out and speak, and as a republican, to speak out on
17 this. Thank you very much.

18 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much, sir.
19 We appreciate you taking the time to join us today, and
20 by the way, I should have mentioned earlier, and
21 neglected to mention the lines that are in existence
22 today actually were drawn by the courts because of the
23 district that existed at the time on redistricting. The
24 lines we all have today, the lines which divide Fresno
25 as it is divided today by different districts, as well

1 as the rest of the state, were not drawn by the
2 legislature, they were drawn by the courts. And of
3 course, the courts don't hold public hearings when them
4 draw their lines, so those lines were drawn without the
5 benefit of this kind of input.

6 We next have Mr. Harry Dulan, D-U-L-A-N. Did
7 I do it correct? And Mr. John Harris I'm going to give
8 one last chance. These are the only two people I have
9 left that have not testified, so if we have either one
10 of those that are able to come forward here within a
11 moment or so, we will recognize them.

12 And let me, while we're waiting one moment for
13 that, let me announce what the remaining hearings will
14 be. Next Friday will be in San Francisco, at the Edmund
15 G. Brown States Building, that will be at 11:00 in the
16 morning. On June 1st we'll be having a hearing at
17 Monterey, for Monterey Bay area actually, be in Seaside,
18 Seaside City Hall. That will be at city council
19 chambers there, June 1st. On June 8th we'll be in Los
20 Angeles at the Ronald Reagan State Building, downtown
21 LA. June 22nd, we'll have a hearing in the State
22 Capitol at Jess Unruh Room in Sacramento, that will be
23 covering the Northern California area, Sacramento area.
24 From that, July 6th, San Bernadino, and July 13th, we'll
25 be holding a hearing in Orange County. Those are the

1 hearings the Assembly has scheduled already, and with
2 that, let me see, is this Mr. Dulan or Mr. Harris?

3 MR. DULAN: Dulan.

4 (Whereupon the remainder of the proceedings
5 were reported by Greta Gregory, Certified
6 Shorthand Reporter.)

7 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Mr. Dulan. Is it
8 D-U-L-A-N?

10 MR. DULAN: That's correct.

11 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Harry Dulan.

12 MR. DULAN: Harry Dulan.

13 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: You have a microphone.

14 MR. DULAN: I'm Harry Dulan. I'm a resident
15 of Fresno. I have been here for the last almost 28
16 years and have been voting since before I moved here. I
17 am public affairs officer for the Social Security
18 Administration and I am just speak as a citizen, but I
19 have been working with the Asian Americans Pacific
20 Islander consortium people who spoke earlier today in
21 the area of really trying to help all segments of our
22 community and actually specifically the southern Central
23 California area to benefit all from all of the different
24 things that they're eligible for, and in that particular
25 area with redistricting I am very interested that
26 adequate representation be done as far as the boundaries
27 so that there is not really a gerrymandering, so to
28 speak, anymore than is normal so that the adequate

1 representatives that we do have we will continue to have
2 in this particular area.

3 There are, aside from cultural differences and
4 language differences and socioeconomic differences some
5 very interesting things that we have, for example, in
6 the area that we call southwest Fresno. One of those
7 areas is the fact that a premiere high school as far as
8 winning the academic decathlon every year is Edison High
9 School, which is in southwest Fresno.

10 Yet at the same time you have a lot of
11 students that are of one ethnic majority that are at the
12 top of the scale, but you have a lot that are at the
13 bottom, and so even though we may say English is a major
14 language and everybody should speak English, we still
15 have a great disparity as far as the ability to
16 understand the language, and so we just want to close by
17 saying thank you for the opportunity to speak, as well,
18 we are supportive of the boundary lines, so to speak, as
19 presently stated or close to as presently stated.

20 Don't want any more separation than what we
21 have, actually would look forward to perhaps even a more
22 consolidation of those lines, so that we would
23 definitely make certain that these needs which I as an
24 individual citizen, but working in a professional
25 capacity have actually become more aware of as I went

1 out into the community, saw them, they're not going to
2 come here personally and tell you, but I'm telling you
3 on behalf of many of those. Thank you for your time.

4 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. Dulan, for coming here today. And did Mr. Harris
6 come forward? Was there anyone else who had
7 submitted -- do we have Judy Steinke present? Judy
8 Steinke or anyone representing her from AFSTED, the
9 American Federation of State, County and Municipal
10 Employees. And the Merced County Farm Bureau had
11 indicated they would have somebody here. Is there
12 anyone here from the Merced Farm County Bureau? Is
13 there anyone else who had turned in request to speak
14 that we have not somehow gotten up here?

15 There being none, that concludes our hearing
16 today. I would just thank everyone for taking the time
17 to come here. This is very valuable to us. We pick up
18 information that we cannot find out any other way except
19 by you telling us, so thank you for being so active and
20 for being so public spirited. Your civic spirit
21 characterizes the fact that you are so civil minded and
22 will be reflected for the next ten years in the
23 boundaries of districts that affect you and your
24 neighbors.

25 Thank you again, and before we adjourn,

1 Mr. Leonard.

2 MR. LEONARD: Mr. Chairman, I want to join in

3 your remarks and thank everybody that took the time to

4 come out and those that took also the time to stay

5 through the entire hearing. A lot of your suggestions,

6 keeping communities of interest together, particularly

7 in the central valley communities, I wholeheartedly

8 agree with. What I'm looking for as we begin to draw

9 the lines and I know I'm asking a lot because the data

10 is just coming out, is more specifics. As you review

11 the census data, as you discuss the changes that need to

12 be made in the districts, more specifics about what

13 communities should be put together, what communities are

14 together now that really aren't communities of interest.

15 Those kinds of specifics I think would be helpful to the

16 committee, as we all know that this is a very

17 controversial and a very highly politicized process, and

18 we all want to do the best job possible, but without the

19 adequate information as to which communities should be

20 put with another community, we don't know if we're doing

21 the right thing or making the mistake, and as the

22 chairman said, when the California Supreme Court drew

23 these lines a decade ago they followed the law. They

24 did the best job possible, but they did not get public

25 input. It was not required under the court hearing.

1 The lawyers spoke, not the public.

2 This process demands public input, and so now
3 you have made an investment today and I would encourage
4 you to follow through on that good investment of time by
5 not letting this committee or the legislature off the
6 hook on the directions we should go in drawing the
7 lines.

8 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: Thank you very much,
9 Mr. Leonard. Mr. Cardenas.

10 MR. CARDENAS: I also wanted to thank everyone
11 present and everyone who is a part of this hearing. One
12 thing that I think needs to be understood, and that is
13 that the purpose of these hearings is to make sure that
14 we get a realistic and honest perspective and
15 understanding of the various communities around
16 California, and I also wanted to note that people are
17 not limited to only making testimony in one language, as
18 we know here in California many, many languages are
19 spoken, dozens of languages, and that means that each
20 community if we have someone who wants to be heard,
21 therefore, shall be heard and whatever tone, whatever
22 language they feel comfortable speaking, and I just
23 wanted to make sure that was clear. And I'm sure that
24 it will be -- I hope that everybody understood that
25 before, but it wasn't articulated specifically as far as

1 I can tell, and I wanted to make sure that people
2 understand that, and this is not the last hearing, so
3 hopefully as people come forward in the future hearings
4 we will see people and make sure that they understand
5 that they are here to feel comfortable in articulating
6 themselves in the needs of community of interest as best
7 they can, however they can, so I want to thank all of
8 you for articulating your needs and your interest so
9 eloquently today. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LONGVILLE: And last, let me note
11 that this is the assembly committee. There are two
12 committees, one in the assembly, one in the senate.
13 After we've each done of our jobs of adopting lines in
14 our individual houses, we will then or each one of these
15 two committees has adopted lines, we will have to get
16 together to work out differences between the lines that
17 have been proposed by the assembly and proposed by the
18 senate. For all four categories that we draw lines for,
19 the state senate, the state assembly, the congressional
20 delegation from California and the State Board of
21 equalization, so as part of that process the senate is
22 also holding some hearings, and on May 22nd the senate
23 committee will be holding a hearing in Fresno at the
24 Hugh Burns State Building in the auditorium in Fresno.
25 I mentioned that I don't have -- oh, excuse me, it is

1 from 1:00 until 5:00 in the afternoon for those here.
2 They will also be holding hearings subsequently in San
3 Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose and Sacramento, and that
4 full schedule is out in the lobby as well as the
5 schedules I have described earlier for the assembly
6 committee.

7 Again, thank you all very much. Those people
8 who believe that government is inaccessible and too
9 difficult to participate in unfortunately don't realize
10 as you realize that if you do care and want to take the
11 time and trouble you can have a lot of impact. Thank
12 you for acknowledging that. Thank you for being here.
13 Thank you for giving us the benefit of your information.
14 We appreciate it, and this meeting is now adjourned.

15 (Proceedings concluded at 1:40 p.m.)

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1 State of California)
2 County of Fresno) ss.

3 We, GRETA GREGORY and JULIE KEENEY, do hereby
4 certify that the foregoing pages comprise a full, true
5 and correct transcript of the proceedings held in the
6 within-entitled matter on the 11th day of May, 2001.

7 In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my
8 hand and affixed my signature at my office in Fresno,
9 California, this 21st day of May, 2001.

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GRETA GREGORY, C.S.R. NO. 8612

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JULIE KEENEY, C.S.R. NO. 8804

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